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## The Gospel of the Incarnation.

### A SERMON,

PREFACHED BY William Morley Punshon, LL.D., IN THE WESLEYAN CHAPEL,  
LONDON.

*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same.*—Hebrews ii: 14.

SOME eighteen hundred years ago, in the land of Judea, a strange restlessness had come upon the public mind. If a stranger, just about that time, had visited the holy city, and had made himself acquainted with the inner life of its inhabitants, he would have found them all engrossed with one absorbing theme. It had superseded, as a matter of interest, commerce and conquest and the intrigues of faction and the concerns of ordinary politics. It had become the unconfessed hope of matrons and the deep study of earnest men; and so thoroughly had it spread that it became identified with every thinking of the Hebrew mind and with every beating of the Hebrew heart. This subject was the advent of a deliverer who had been promised by God unto their fathers. In their holy books there were circumstantial accounts as to the signs of His coming, and as to the period at which He might be expected to appear; and these various prophecies converged to their fulfillment. There had been rumors of certain meteoric appearances, which, in Eastern countries, were deemed the luminous heralds of the birth of a great king; and the pulse of many a patriot Jew would throb more quickly, as, in his vain dream of material empire, he saw the Messiah in vision already riding upon the necks of His enemies and His followers flushed with the spoil. In the midst of this national expectancy, events of strange significance were occurring in a quarter from which the eyes of the world would have turned heedlessly or in scorn. The national census was decreed to be taken through all the provinces of the Roman empire, in the time of Cæsar Augustus. In obedience to the imperial mandate, each one went up for enrollment to his own—that is, his ancestral city. The influx of strangers had crowded the little inn in the little town of Bethlehem, so that the outbuildings were laid under tribute to

furnish shelter to later comers. In the stable of that mean hostelry a young child was born. There was nothing about Him to distinguish Him from the ordinary offspring of Jewish mothers, but at the moment of His birth a song from angel harps and voices rang through the plains of Bethlehem and ravished the watchful shepherds with snatches of celestial music. Small space had passed e'er the wondering peasants beheld a star of unusual brilliancy hovering over that obscure dwelling. By and by the inn was thrown into commotion by the arrival of a company of strangers from afar, swarthy and richly appareled, who brought gifts and spices and presented them and bowed their knees in homage before the new-born babe as before a royal child.

Rapidly flew the glad tidings from lip to lip, and passed from one to another until the city was full of it—received by haughty Pharisee with scoffs and derision, hailed with devout gladness by the faithful few who watched for the consolation of Israel—startling all the masses of the people—shaking the vassal monarch on His throne, “Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.”

Dear friends, it is ours in this day to rejoice in the blessing which on that day descended on mankind. Blindness, indeed, hath happened unto Israel, so that they see not the glorious vision; but the advent of the Saviour is the chiefest joy of multitudes who once struggled like ourselves on earth and who now triumph through His grace in heaven, and multitudes more—believers in His true humanity and happy in their brotherhood with Emmanuel, thank God for the unspeakable gift, and that “Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same.”

The one thought of the text and that to which I want to confine myself for a few moments to-night, is our Saviour's assumption of humanity; and I want just to present it in a few of the aspects in which it will be most easy for us to understand.

In the first place, perhaps, it will be necessary for us to remark that it was a condescending assumption of humanity. It is obviously impossible that the language in which the apostle here refers to Christ could have been used legitimately of anybody possessing essentially the nature of flesh and blood. The words as applied to any mere man, even the holiest, even the most heroic, are impertinent and without meaning.

There is necessarily implied the fact of pre-existence, and of pre-existence in a nature other and higher than that which He assumed. In a subsequent verse the implication is further made that this pre-existence was in a nature other and higher than the angelic, for we are told that, in His descent from the highest to recover and to save, “He took not hold on angels.”



That is the way in which it should be rendered, "He took not hold on angels," but they perish without redemption, without hope, "but He took hold upon the seed of Abraham." In the previous chapter, the apostle largely illustrates our Saviour's essential superiority over angels. "And when He bringeth in the first begotten into the world, He saith: And let all the angels of God worship Him." Just as when a crown prince, you know, starts upon his travels into a distant country, the choicest of the nobility are designated to be his attendants and to follow in his train, so "when He bringeth His first begotten into the world"—a strange land to Him—He saith: "Let all the angels of God, all the principalities and powers in heavenly places wait upon, worship, serve, attend Him." Again He says, "Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire; but unto the Son He saith: Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever—a sceptre of righteousness is a sceptre of Thy kingdom." From these passages and others of similar tenor, whose name is almost legion, we are swift to conclude and we are bold to affirm the proper and originated Godhead of the Saviour. It was God made man for man to die. Yes, brethren, that stoop of illimitable graciousness was from the highest to the lowest. In mysterious union with the child-heart of that unconscious babe, the veiled divinity slumbered. That weary and hungering traveler upon the journey of life—it was Jehovah's fellow! That sufferer, agonized but uncomplaining, who has just bowed His head to drink in meek submission the cup which His Father has given Him—it is the true God and eternal life. Strange marriage between the finite and Infinite! Incomprehensible union between divinity and clay! There are those scoffers in the world, I know, who dismiss the doctrine of the incarnation as the figment of fancy, or as the dream of fanaticism, some who try everything by the standard of their own perceptions and invest their own reason—at best of no great tallness, and which prejudice has dwarfed into still smaller stature, with absolute dictatorship over the world of mind. They profess to tell us that they disbelieve the fact of the incarnation, simply—stripped of all the pseudo-philosophic words with which they veil their unbelief, because they do not understand it. Meanwhile they live in a mysterious world. Nature has her thousand secrets which their art has no skill to unravel in the daily concerns of life, in the blessings Providence pours forth ungrudgingly. They take their churlish share in blessings whose wherefore they do not understand. They are themselves a mystery, perhaps greater than all. They cannot understand, any one of them, how that strange and subtle organism which they call "man" comes into being—how that strange and subtle principles which they call "life" floods them every moment with rapture; and yet, with marvelous

inconsistency, credulous on matters where no mystery might have been expected to abide, they are skeptical on matters where mystery exists of necessity, and where the absence of it would have been a suspicious sign. "Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou discover the Almighty to perfection?"

The incarnation of Christ is a mystery. We grant it—an inexplicable and a solemn mystery. Would there be no mystery, on the other hand, think you, in the event of its denial? Let us see. There is an individual obscurely born, reared in village humbleness, looked on by His kindred according to the flesh with coldness if not with dislike, with no influential connections, with no noble patronage, bold in His reproof of sin, austere in His mode of living, telling, with a strange candor, all to whom He ministered that He required absolute service, that He had no preferments in His gift, that He had no bribes to win the allegiance of the sordid, that it was more than likely that if they followed Him they must part with everything else; they must separate from all that was endearing; they must be cut off from ecclesiastical privilege; they must be traduced by slander; they must be haunted by persecution; nay, they must be ready for martyrdom because they who killed them would think in their blindness that they were doing God service. Well, now, look at that individual. In spite of all these disadvantages, and in spite of all His honesty, by the mere charm of His teaching and of His life He gathers a multitude of followers. He charms the fisher from the lake; He charms the soldier from the standard; He charms the publican from the receipt of custom; and not only these who might be supposed, perhaps, to risk little by the venture; but He charms the physician from his practice; He charms the ruler from his pride; He charms the scholarly student from the feet of his master. The chief authorities conspire against Him, but His doctrine spreads. He is attainted as a criminal, but His name is held dearer than ever. His death gratifies His bloodthirsty and relentless foes; but His disciples rally, and His cause lives on. His tomb is jealously guarded and hermetically sealed, but it is somehow found empty, notwithstanding; and He has established an empire in the hearts of thousands upon thousands for which they are at any time ready to die, and which promises to be as permanent as time. And you ask me to believe that all that could have been accomplished by a mere man like ourselves! Would not that be a mystery, think you, than all other mysteries deeper and more marvelous far? Well, again, look on that individual. During His lifetime, on the testimony of unquestionable witnesses, He exerted miraculous power. He has power over the elements, for the winds are still at His command, and the lawless sea obeys Him. He



has power over inorganic matter and over vegetable life, for He blasts the fig-tree by a syllable, and five loaves and two fishes swell up at His command into a royal banquet for five thousand men. He has power over ferocious passion, for at His word—at His look, indeed—the soldiery lose their malignity, and the foul demoniac is comely as a child. He has power over sickness, for the numbed limbs of the paralytic quicken as He steps into the strength of manhood, and the leprosy scales off from its victim and he is ready for the fellowships of men. He has power, indeed, over death, for by Him the maiden rises from her shroud, and the young man greets his mother on the way to burial, and weeping sisters grasp their ransomed brother, a four days' dweller in the tomb. And you ask me to believe that all this can have been accomplished by a mere man like ourselves! "Oh," but they say, "He was a good Man we acknowledge, a model Man, a great Teacher, a representative Man, the highest Man. In some sense, indeed, He may be said to have had an inferior and derived divinity. No wonder, therefore, that He should thus exert influence and thus extend a dominion." No, pardon me, but this only deepens the mystery, for this model Man who held no compromise with evil, who frowned away dissimulation from His presence, of whose inimitable morals Rousseau, no friend of His, said that if the life and death of Socrates were those of an angel, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God; this model Man professed all His life to be divine, received divine honors without rebuking the offerers, insisted upon His profession of divinity so strongly that the Jews stoned Him for blasphemy, never failed to say that He was one with the Father, and that He should, by and by, come again in the clouds of heaven. Oh, Jesus Christ cannot simply be a good and a benevolent Man. There are only two alternatives possible: He is an impostor or a God.

Now, unbeliever, you who scout the mystery of our faith, you who dismiss it as the figment of fancy or the dream of fanaticism, solve this mystery of your own. Pass through life disowning all the truths and doctrines in which we glory, but shut up—shut up as I shut you up to-night—to this far deeper mystery, either on the one hand of a good man who has spoken falsehood, or, on the other hand, of an impostor who cheated a world, while we, from the lowest dust into which gratitude can sink, will lift up our hearts and our voices, and say, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh."

That is the first thought—that it is a condescending incarnation.

Well, then, following upon that in the second place, the assumption of humanity was voluntary. This, indeed, follows

inevitably from the foregone conclusion of His divinity. Being God, of course, He was under the pressure of no external obligation. To accommodate theological language to human infirmity, God is sometimes represented as influenced by outward things; but really every divine act is self-contained and self-originating. Christ, therefore, could be under the pressure of no possible obligation. Law was Himself in spoken precept. Justice was Himself engraven on the universe. Mercy was Himself—the radiation from the light of His own beneficent countenance upon the creatures that He had made. Every administration of physical government was His own, either in independent action or in the harmonious union of the divine Trinity. It is manifest, therefore, that, so far as the divine nature was concerned His assumption of our humanity was disinterested and voluntary. In fact, there was nothing prompting Him to it but the upwelling of His own strong tenderness toward the hapless and fallen creatures that He had made. This spontaneity of the offering is necessary; and I will tell you why I dwell upon it—because it rescues the Father from the suspicion of injustice which from the other side of infidelity is very often cast upon Him. But it seems as though our Saviour, knowing that some blasphemers would rise up in later times to throw a slur upon His Father's tenderness, defends Him by anticipation, and He says, "Therefore doth my Father love Me, because I lay down My life for the sheep. No man taketh My life from Me"—as if the thought had just struck Him that there might be those who would accuse His Father of injustice—"No man taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again."

And beside this spontaneity, which at once redeems the act from the suspicion of injustice, remember also that it was a stoop of condescension undertaken with the object of a commensurate reward. That may seem strange to some, but the apostle understands it. "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." A world ransomed from the destroyer—a mediatorial kingdom erected upon the ruins of earth's falling thrones—a name that is above every name, honored in heaven by prostrate obedience and undying song, honored on earth by every confessing lip and every bending knee—this was the joy set before Him, and for this He endured—bore bravely—the cross, and despised—looked down with infinite contempt upon—mysterious and inconceivable shame.

And, besides, that an enforced submission could not be practically or judicially available, there is that in the voluntariness of the suffering which at once exalts our confidence and en-



hances our affection for our surety and for our friend. We judge of the excellence of virtue in our small way by the willingness with which it is practised, and although, as we are all under the bonds of a common obligation to obedience, we can hardly enter into a comparison, yet, unquestionably, the willingness—the infinite willingness—with which the Saviour threw Himself into the breach and rescued the world that was perishing is a claim upon our gratitude and devotion in no ordinary degree. Oh, let sinners, like ourselves, think of it, how, when the destinies of the world trembled in the balance, when the issue was so great, so fearful, so tremendous, that there was silence in heaven, the silence was sweetly broken by the voice from the throne, “Here am I, send me. Lo, I come, in the volume of the book, it is written of me, to do thy will, O God;” and in another passage, “I delight to do thy will, O my God.” Now, think of what the will of God in this instance comprehended—the veiling of essential glory, the enduring the contradiction of sinners, the pangs of desertion and treachery, the bloody death upon the cross, the mysterious and terrible abandonment, for the moment, by the Father, sorrow’s crown, a sorrow a thousand-fold intenser and more terrible than any other suffering. And it was through this—for your sake and mine—that the Saviour intelligently volunteered to pass, that He might rescue a dying world. Oh, as we, sinners like ourselves, see Him as He enters upon His work, and as He prosecutes His work without difficulty and without hindrance, or rather with difficulty and with hindrance, but with difficulty mastered and hindrance overcome, surely there is enough to excite our deepest gratitude and our loftiest praise. When He came into the world—when, actually incarnate, He entered upon His brief ministry—it was with no reluctant step; it was in no hireling spirit. No; what said He? “My meat is to do the will;” and you remember what the will was. It comprehended all that I have said. “My meat,” as necessary and as pleasant to Him as His daily sustenance—“My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.” Nay, he seems on one occasion to be altogether like a bird dashing itself against the bars of its cage for freedom, simply because the purpose of His mission tarried in its fulfillment. “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened”—it was a baptism of blood, remember—“how am I straitened till it be accomplished.” Thus did He think of and publish the great end of His coming.

Now, look at Him, dear friends; look at Him to-night. I would bring Him down before you. See Him in His sorrowful pilgrimage. Mark Him as, one wave after another wave, the proud waters go over His soul, and then He dashes the spray and the surge away from Him, and breasts them all like

a strong swimmer, and goes through unto the end, trampling upon the breakers of God's anger, and treads the wine-press of His wrath alone; and then think of all your ingratitude, frailty, rebelliousness, pride; and, while you humble yourselves in the dust, come gather yourselves up to-night into a fresher consecration.

"O Lamb of God, was ever pain,  
Was ever love like thine?"  
"Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands the soul, the life, the all."

This is the second thought.

Now, you have heard that the incarnation of Christ—His assumption of humanity—was condescending and was voluntary. Now, I want you to look at it as complete. It was no mock assumption of humanity. The entire nature was taken on. He had a human body with all its infirmities. He had a human soul with its completeness of faculty, and with its capability of endurance—with its every capacity and with its every affection.

There were three reasons which made this complete assumption of the nature necessary. It was necessary, first, because the human was the nature which had sinned, and the human, therefore, must bear the brand of the divine displeasure. It was necessary, in the second place, that the world might have the best possible embodied manifestation of God—that in the minds of men, too gross, too carnal, to comprehend ideas that were purely spiritual, there might be the vision of the incarnate Son as the highest embodied possibility of being. And then it was necessary, in the third place, that the great want of the nations in all the ages of history might be met and complied with—of perfect pureness allied to perfect sympathy—the arm omnipotent to deliver, and behind it the heart tender and brave and sympathizing to feel. These were the three reasons that made it necessary that Christ should take our nature completely upon Himself. And the real humanity of Christ is attested by abundant authentications. In every sense of the word—I am bold to declare it—in every sense of the word He was a man with men. He was born helpless as others are born. Through His early years He dwelt in obscurity at Nazareth in the house of His reputed father, and worked at His handicraft for bread. He grew as other children grow, in successive developments into maturity, and through the processes of the years developed the maturity of manhood. When in the exercise of His ministry He went out among His fellows, He sustained, as they did, the relations of mutual dependence and help. He was no breaker of existing states of things. He was no iconoclast of even that which was faulty in the government that surrounded Him. He was a loyal subject. He paid the tribute-money without murmuring, and He submitted to



every ordinance of men. He was no dark ascetic—no saintly anchorite—no recluse that dwelt apart like a star. If men asked Him to go to their houses, He went; and He blest the frugal board, and He poured His blessing upon the marriage festival; and He sorrowed with them when the homes of their love were invaded and the light of some loved one had been suddenly quenched in their sight. His filial affection shone conspicuously throughout the whole of His history and gleamed out, brilliant as a star, in the moment of His mysterious passion. His care for those who followed Him ceased not with His own life. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end." He was a man—thoroughly a man—with men. Does human nature hunger? He hungered in the plain where the delusive fig-tree grew. Does human nature thirst? He felt the pang sharply upon the cross. Is human nature wearied with excessive journeying or toil? "He sat thus on the well." Does human nature shrink and fear and quail under the pressure of apprehended trouble? Listen, as He has at once told us what to do and told us how to do it: "O my Father, if it be possible." Is not that human? "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt." Does human nature get possessed of a great terror? "He was heard in that He feared." Does human nature weep unbidden tears? Pity wrung them from Him as He gazed upon the fated Jerusalem with sorrow. Real and genuine human sorrow wrung them from Him at the tomb where Lazarus lay. Yes, he was a man with men. In all affection, sensibility, sympathy and everything but sin, He was a man with men. Look at Him as He sustains every grace and is disfigured by no blemish of humanity—banishing sorrow from the homes, and sin from the hearts of men, with not an act which men can trace up to selfishness, and not a word which they can brand as insincere—His whole life one kindness, and then His death an atonement. Behold the divine man! The divine man! The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, the skill to make canvas speak or marble breathe, or to play upon men's hearts as upon a harp of many tunes, the glory of chivalry or of that baser chivalry that climbs to notoriety up the slopes where the trampled lie, and where the red rain drops from many a heart—what are their claims to His? Behold the divine man! Be silent, ye competitors for greatness, and let Him speak alone. Erase all meaner names from thy tablets, thou applauding world, and carve this name instead. Shrine it in your loving hearts, ye who have learnt to believe in Him, and who trust in His atonement for light and life beyond the grave. Let it be there deeper than all other memory of home or friend—the man—the divine man! Christ Jesus. "Forasmuch, then, as children are par-

takers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same."

Then one other thought, but it is the chief one. This assumption of humanity was condescending and voluntary and complete that it might be atoning.

The great purpose designed in the Redeemer's advent could not be accomplished but through death. This was the supreme object—the ultimate object for which He came into the world—that He might "bear our sins in His own body on the tree." There had been numerous predictions—in the seers' visions, from the prophets' lips, in the various adumbrations of typical foreshadowing—of some mighty one who should, in the end of the world, appear to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And this was a matter of such transcendent importance that all other purposes were rendered subservient to its achievement. He, therefore, took part of flesh and blood, not merely to furnish us with an example of unsinning obedience, although such was the illustrious holiness that beamed from his spotless life that the world had never seen the like—not merely to impress upon the world the teachings of a pure morality, although such was the spirituality of His lessons that never man spake like this man—not merely that He might work His healing wonders even, and show to the bleared vision of the world beneficence in action, although when the ear heard Him it blessed Him, and although at His every footstep some sorrow vanished and some joy came in. All these, however, separably noticeable, were only collateral—incidental—to the one purpose for which He came into the world. He was born to die. These were but the flowers that He scattered here and there, right and left, on His way to the cross. Distinct, steadfast, from His very birth—more distinct and vivid through the last years of His ministry—there is the vision—the appointed goal—the cross—that to which all His struggles tended—that towards which all His actions converged—that which was the supreme and ultimate reason of His coming into the world at all—the cross. And the figure of the cross was distinctly before Him, and His eye, steady, serene, unflinching, fastened always there. That is His design—to be the surety of an insolvent humanity—to be the friend of a forsaken race—to be the refuge and shelter of endangered men. All the former characteristics of His incarnation had a bearing upon this, the chief design, and were essential to its completeness and value? Do you not see how?

It was essential, first, that a being of high estate should condescend, because none other could avail. No angel had merit to spare; no man had merit at all. And, moreover, it was essential in order that the divinity might sustain the humanity under the pressure of its agonies, uniting with it to



confer a plentitude of propitiatory value. Then it was necessary that that devotion should be voluntary, because there could be no availableness in exacted suffering, and it must be profoundly willing if it would be infinitely worthy. And then it was necessary that the assumption should be complete, because the human had sinned and the human must die—because as in Adam, the first federal representative of the race, all were dead, so in Adam again—another Adam, the second federal representative of the race—all might have the free gift come upon them even to justification of life. Now you see where we have gone. We have got a willing victim. We have got a willing victim of high estate. We have got a willing victim of high estate who wedded Himself to the sinning nature. It only wants one thing more to meet every requirement, and that is that this willing human victim, allied mysteriously to the divine, should be without guilt, either hereditary or actual, in Himself. Well, the miraculous conception—and you see how one Scripture doctrine hangs upon another—the miraculous conception provided for the first. “He was born not of blood, not of the will of man, not of the flesh, but of God”; and, standing steadfast in the midst of the gainsayers, He could say, in the midst of His spotless life, “Which of you convicteth Me of sin?” He was in the world, but not of the world. Like the chaste and queenly moon that shines down upon the haunts of beggars and the dens of thieves, and loses none of its brilliancy and gathers none of their foulness, so He moved about among the scum and offscouring of human society, and yet was perfectly and absolutely pure—without sin. No fault could be found in Him even by the embittered Pilate. Thrice the disparted cloud gave utterance to the voice that attested His righteousness from heaven. Ay, and the baffled demons, as they slunk regretfully and remorsefully out of the shrines they had inhabited, were obliged to wring out of themselves the reluctant confession, “We know Thee who Thou art, the Holy one—the Holy one of God.”

There, then, you see the willing victim—the human victim—the victim mysteriously allied to the divine—the victim without obligation and without taint—the divine human Saviour—man’s appointed Saviour—God’s incarnate Son.

Brethren, look at this Jesus thus incarnated for you, and as you look let your prayer rise—

“Answer Thy mercy’s whole design,  
My God incarnated for me.”

Close upon the sharp agony of Gethsemane came His arrest by the treachery of one whom He had trusted. Patiently He bears the ribaldry and insult in the dishonored judgment hall

of Pilate. Wearily He treads the rugged pathway to Calvary, bearing His own cross. And now the mighty crowd is gathered upon the hill of shame; and now the cross is reared, and the nails are fastened into the quivering flesh, and amid the scoff and the slander ebbs His pure life away. The last ministering angel leaves Him, for He must tread this winepress alone. Darkness gathers solemnly, and oh—mystery of mysteries!—the Father hides His face from the Beloved. Darkness deepened in the sky, and on the mind; how long the affrighted gazers knew not. Then comes a cry, sharp, piercing, agonizing, and all is silent. “It is finished. It is finished.” The darkness gradually disperses; the malefactors and their companions are seen hanging upon the crosses three. The herding multitude of human beings gradually swarm off the hillside, talking eagerly and wonderingly about the events that they have witnessed. The moon rises calmly in the night sky, as if her sister sun had never set upon a scene of blood. But, oh, what a change had those few hours wrought in the destiny of the world! Brethren, in that death is the life of man. We can never fail to recognize it. God forbid that the time should come when we should ever fail to preach it. In that death is the life of man. Christ hath died, “the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” Christ hath died. Tell it to that despairing sinner—that man who is just about to seek escape from the upbraidings of an angry conscience by the terrible alternative of self-murder, that man that hath the cord about his neck, or the pistol at his throat. Go to him. Be quick! Tell him he need not die, for Christ hath died—hath died to bear His sin away.

Salvation! That is the end of it. That is the gospel—the inner kernel of the gospel under all the wrappings—salvation. Sound it out from that hillside of Calvary. Let the summits of the sister hills echo it. Sound it out from every avenue of this vast necropolis of a world. Salvation for the guilty, for the condemned, for all, for *you!*—for *you!*

Now, that is the gospel of the incarnation. My dear friends, receive it into your hearts, and may God help you to live it out, until at last you see Jesus not on the cross, but on the throne.



## The Nature of Gospel Truth the Prophecy of its Universal Recognition.

### A MISSIONARY SERMON.

PREACHED BY James M. Ludlow, D.D., IN THE WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BROOKLYN.

*"The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."*—Matthew xiii : 33.

THIS figure contains more than a prophecy of the universal spread of Messiah's kingdom : it tells something of the law of its propagation. Leaven is chemically adapted to work upon the meal : that is, there is something in the nature of the meal which the fermenting agency of the leaven excites, until, particle by particle, the whole is leavened. You cannot leaven sand or lime-dust, because there is no such natural adaptation between them and the fermenting property. So there is something in Christianity, and something in human nature mutually adaptive. It is our purpose to show that this adaptation of the Gospel to human nature is so strong that, as by a law, it necessitates the ultimate evangelization of all mankind.

Listen to some of these "voices of the soul" which are clear-sounding prophecies of the triumph of the gospel.

I. The *truths* taught by our Saviour are such as verify themselves to our deepest consciousness, and are intuitively approved by our best thoughts.

Watch that floating buoy ! It is now overwashed and dashed out of sight ; now it is flung by the fury of the waves, as if it had broken its chain and was gone forever. But it re-appears ; and year after year it will float, wildly or tranquilly over the same bar or rocks. The sailors who have not been on that coast for many months expect to see it, and, by its indication, turn their craft from the destruction whose maw is close beside it. The buoy remains because it is not a mere float, but is anchored to the bottom. Such, too, has been the history of Christ's truth. Infidelity has at times overwashed and concealed it from the popular faith. Persecution has seemed to destroy it utterly. But here it is yet. As Paul found it, so did Augustine, and Gregory, and Bernard, and Luther ; and so did last-night's convert. We to-day believe it ; to-morrow we doubt it ; now vividly realize it ; now forget it. But whenever we look earnestly through whatever haze of philosophy or spray of fear, we see it, for it is anchored at the bottom of the great human heart.

We all have certain thoughts which are not due to any particular culture, and which we cannot get rid of by any culture, or lack of culture : however vague, they are convictions ; we may not formulate them, but we feel them. We build a fire of bright-glowing, plausible objections to them, but, like the

bush in Horeb the fire only illumines the fact that they are unconsumed. Here are some of the branches of that bush.

*An impression of God.* The world is not yet wise enough to contradict Plato, saying "No one who had taken up in youth this opinion that the gods do not exist, ever continued in the same until he was old." We look toward heaven, and shut our minds against the Deity; but it is like shutting our eyes against the sunshine. The glare goes through the eyelids, and the nerve tingles with it. All we accomplish is to shut out the form of the sun and the whole world beautified in its light. Atheism has the glare of Deity, but not His glory. The professed atheist uses the name of Good in his blasphemy even more frequently than the believer in his prayer. God does not leave Himself without a witness before any heart. He shines luridly through the atmosphere of human hate, vaguely through the mists of indifference, clearly through the medium of faith and love.

We have also an impression of *Divine justice*. Conscience, like soft wax, fits itself into the mould of what the Bible says about right and wrong, about righteousness and sin; and, though skepticism destroy the mould, conscience retains the shape of it. We may deny the theological expression "Divine justice;" but the heart is incapable of denying ultimate justice; and both philosophically and practically, they are the same thing.

So the general features of the doctrine of *atonement*, such as salvation of the soul in some way satisfactory to infinite right, and in all ways gratuitously to us, are recognized the world over. The cross is a stumbling-block and foolishness to many; but the world does not get around that stumbling-block, nor keep its eyes off that foolishness. In some form or other the two elements of atonement mentioned—justice and gratuity—have been elements in the problem of peace between conscience and the Inspirer of conscience since the beginning. Blood streaming down from altars has made the boundaries of the different religions of the earth. Out of the waters of guilt men have tried to drag themselves on to the "Rock of Ages," whether it has had the shape of the cross or not. What we deride as we float in the calm of our self-righteous pride, we will some day give the world to cling to, and curse the ebbing waves of doubt which drag us away as we try to grasp it.

The heart has also a native *impulse to pray*. The earth exhales mists; they rise and form the clouds; they descend in the rain. It has been thus since there first went up a mist and watered the earth. And so since God first dropped the dew of His communion with man in Paradise, the heart of humanity has exhaled desires and aspirations, and waited, too often,



without faith, like an unblest desert, but often **with the experience** that the windows of heaven were open.

Humanity has also an instinct of *immortality*. The mere arguments for it may be incomplete, just as the science of Biology is incomplete, though we feel the life. Professor Tyn-dall came out of philosophical dream-land and walked again with his eyes wide-open, when, after saying in his Belfast address, "I discern in matter the promise and potency of every form and quality of life," he made the statement: "I have noticed during years of self-observation that it is not in hours of clearness and vigor that that doctrine commends itself to my mind, and that, in the presence of stronger and healthier thought, it ever dissolves and disappears, as offering no solution of the mystery in which we dwell, and of which we form a part."

So of all the great principles of Jesus' teaching; they are like the ribs of rock which are found beneath the soil. Blowing sands and decaying vegetation may cover them up; but we will always find them by digging. How many unbelievers, the proudest, who pledged their whole repute against Christ by becoming teachers of unbelief, at the last, when they were brought face to face with the soul's need, have renounced all opposition and tried to cling to Christ? But did you ever hear of one who at death renounced his life-long faith in Christ? We may be sure that in this world of uncertainties, the truth which stands the test of the soul's deepest demands, which voices its persistent aspirations, which glows most brightly, as a dawn, when death throws open the shutters of this chamber of mortality, will universalize itself. For what are all the boasted culture of humanity, and development of social civilization, but the practicalizing of the lessons of human experience?

II. The *character* of those who give themselves up to the commandments and the Spirit of Christ is universally commended, so that opposition to Christian life must be temporary.

How we parade the faults of individual Christians! But these faults signify nothing against the system of Christian morals, for the simple reason that they are faults against the system. You cannot test the skill of an engineer by works which are not built according to his plans. And defects among Christians are not Christian defects; just the reverse—they are unchristian defects, and are universally recognized as departures from the standard. You must not judge the art of the great master by the daubing of careless pupils. Can you find fault with the character commanded and exemplified by the Lord Jesus? Take His idea of purity, involving a clean heart as well as clean ways: Is it not superlative? You can add to it no ray

of virtue, either of your own conception or borrowed from the world's moralists; you could as readily add to the rays of the sun. Take that summing-up of all duty in love; analyze it as an obligation, as a power. It is absolutely exhaustive, whether the analysis be conducted with the imagination or the conscience. The splendid moralizing of the Gallilean has made that of Cicero and Seneca obsolete. Obedience to it has put man, as Renan says, "on the highest summit of grandeur." It is in his hard-wrung confession "the source of endless moral regenerations." We are confident that such breathings of the absolutely pure will never be forgotten. To borrow Carlyle's figure, like the melody of music which floats far beyond the discords, this, which is so sweet to every conscientious soul—however wrong-headed he may be—will float, ever widening, down the ages, until the world is full of its sweetness.

But look also at the character actually produced in the person of the Great Teacher Himself. We have here not only perfect moralizing, also perfect morality. He lived His teaching. He was the righteousness of God. He did not illustrate His teaching in His life; His life was rather the text, and His system the commentary upon it. Now, this incarnation of the supreme standard of goodness is essentially an omnipotent force in the world. It is not a mere model, but an unfailing source of emulation. Jesus is the archtypical man, and toward His moral excellence humanity is advancing, however slow the steps and with whatever breaks between. And the picture of society 1800 years ago, whether by Paul or the Roman satirists, contrasted with the picture of society to-day, even by the daily press, will demonstrate the movement. We cling tenaciously to the law of the "survival of the fittest" in the moral struggle of the universe. Not until diabolism has been demonstrated to be the final solution of human destiny can we give up a faith in the triumph of what every conscience approves as the supremely right and fair as these are seen in the face of Jesus, "the chief among ten thousand," and "altogether lovely."

III. The *beneficent spirit* of Christianity, as displayed in its influence on the world, is such that it can never cease to engross the human heart. The "blessing of those who were ready to perish," which Job prized as his perpetual glory, has always rested upon the head of the perfect man from heaven. For the Christian spirit puts the robe of perfect comfort around him to whom the world gives only rags. It enables him to say with Paul, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." It satisfies the inner craving of those whom the world is starving, with the Word of God, which is better than the bread that perishes: so that he sings, "I have all things and abound." It receives to sheltering



arms every soul-fleeing from the natural fears which pursue it across the wild track of time. It subdues the wild wail of human woe into the sweetest of minor strains, which the troubled spirit recognizes as a part of the grand anthem of eternal joy. He who went about doing good is, both as example and inspirer, the power of philanthropy, and almost the entire charitable work of the globe is to-day conducted in His name.

And so we take up our prophecy, not alone from the Bible, but from the heart of man, and say: so long as a kind face is winsome; so long as helping hands are grasped in gratitude, so long will the spirit of Jesus be hailed, and the kingdom of Jesus be progressive in the earth.

IV. But the all-conquering element in Christianity is the *Divine Spirit*, who is a light over the world, and a life in the heart of its believers. When God created man He breathed into him the spirit of life, and still "in Him we live and move and have our being." In spite of the deadness through sin, there are yet traces of the Divine in the human spirit. Or we may say, avoiding all theological controversy, there are voids in us which still echo in their emptiness the footfalls of the departed Divinity. And every sound of the returning Spirit is familiar to the soul. God is Himself the most natural of all things to man. This is fully realized after conversion, and is vaguely, but surely felt before. Religion is, as the word means, the binding back of the soul to its first and natural allegiance. And every truly spiritual influence is a cord drawing, and, if we will submit to it, holding us to the heart of our Infinite Father.

*A survey of the history of the kingdom of Christ will show the strong working of these gospel elements in the hearts of men.* Note some features of the conquest already attained.

Other schemes of moral and religious thought have died out because they were overgrown by the advancing thought of succeeding generations. But the Christian scheme has found *ceaseless development*, both in the symmetry of its dogmatic expressions and in the new meaning and applicability of its teachings to human needs. But development through wear is a sign of inherent life. Inanimate things wear out by use. There is thus the same difference between the gospel thoughts and the best of uninspired thoughts, that there is between a mass of matter and the living being. Therefore Christ said, "The words that I speak to you, they are life."

Other schemes have died out notwithstanding the utmost favor and support of men, falling in the line of their ambition. But Christianity has won its triumphs *in spite of everything that the heart can devise against it.* The whole force of imperial power, with the cruel heel of persecution, has tried to trample it out; but this has proved only a more excellent way of plant-

ing it as the seed of a marvelous harvest. Democracy has gnashed on it with its teeth, and as the rabble around Jesus, has cried, "Away with it!" but like its representative on the cross, the dying thief, democracy has in its extremity cried to the Church, "Remember me!" The dying Voltaire voiced the whole political and social revolution which his teachings did so much to kindle, when he sent for a priest to administer to him the holy sacrament. The kings of thought have set themselves against the Lord and against His anointed; but, by their admissions, have built up the logical evidence, and massed the historic, scientific and critical facts for the defense of what they have assailed, as sometimes the violence of the current mounds higher the bar of sand which it seemed to be washing away.

Other systems have appealed to the common tastes and motives of men for their acceptance, rather than to the "council of deep convictions." They have sought success through compromise with the prevailing culture. Such was the policy of early Papal Rome in using the remnant of Pagan doctrines and worship, and more recently in propagating a semi-Hindooism by its Portuguese missionaries in India. Renan drew an inference seemingly warranted by history: "Every idea in order to succeed, must needs make a sacrifice. To conceive the truth is not enough; for success, ways less pure are necessary." But pure Christianity has never taught the "via media" of policy. It has demanded only *unconditional surrender of the human heart* beneath the banner of the absolute truth and right as displayed in Christ. "For what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth, with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" Selfishness is the most powerful of our lower incentives. As Pope, crystalizing its grossness, says: "Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul." But the Gospel takes out that spring from the machinery of the life, and puts in another, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." The pride of man, which is so stubborn that it sits unbent, even in poverty and in prison, falls down before Jesus in utter self-negation. While the world applauds him as the king, David cries, "I am poor and needy"; and takes as his comfort what would seem to be the portion of some outcast; "yet the Lord thinketh upon me." The desire of commendation, the secret of personal enterprise the world over, gives way to self-condemnation when Christ appears, and cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The lower passions and appetites which have ruled and ruined the world, which no moralizing and no discipline can subdue, have cowed down before the gospel-prescribed purity, as the wild beasts before Daniel.



It is further illustrative and confirmatory of the natural adaptedness of the gospel to humanity that it alone has *passed freely over the boundaries of the diverse races and civilizations* of men, showing that it is above all the various cultures of the world, and unaffected by them. Celsus said: "A man must be very weak to imagine that Greeks and Barbarians, in Asia, Europe and Lybia, can ever enter into the same system of religion." That was profound, uninspired wisdom; a mighty argument against the claims of the early Church for universal recognition. Humanly speaking, it was impossible; historically it was the fact that it had never been so. But over the foaming seas and over the snowy mountains, which had been impassable to human thought, the Christian thought floated with the ease and majesty of an angel from heaven.

Weigh this fact also; the *times of most apparent retrograde in the history of the Church have proved to be the real birth-times of new advancement*; as the stalk of the grain droops before it drops its ripened kernels into the ground as the seeds of a manifold harvest to come. It was when the Church was at its lowest corruption and spiritual impotency that Protestantism trod forth to meet the Goliath of superstition. It was when Watts was writing "Religion is dying in the world;" when Butler had just penned, "It is taken for granted that Christianity has been discovered to be fictitious;" and Bolingbroke had succeeded in corrupting the very fountains of religious thought; and Hume was aiming his blows at the tap-root of the Christian philosophy, that Methodism, the most thrifty offshoot of our common Christianity, appeared, which is now budding in our own land at the prolific rate of a new church for every kiss the morning sunlight gives the earth. And in the pride of the infidel mind to-day, in its very taunts and rage, we hail the prophecy of something grand in the development of our Master's Kingdom. "There must be falling away first," says the prediction of the final triumph.

A traveler, seeing a Christian missionary treading his way through the crowded streets of a heathen city, thought of an ant running about the base of a mountain, and said, with plausible incredulity, "The great mountain of heathenism can never, through such slight agency, be cast into the sea." We admit the apparent stupendousness of the task before the Church. All enterprise stands paralyzed before the proposition to convert the world; all except the enterprise which springs from an appreciation, through faith, of the spirit of the Gospel. It must, humanly speaking, take a long time to change the heart of a great people. Especially must they have a sublime patience who put their hands to the work of evangelizing a people whose religion is interwoven throughout with their civilization; cross-woven with their common habits and customs;

wire-woven with ancestral faith; doubled and redoubled until it has grown a thousand-ply in the thickness of its superstition, as is the case with some forms of heathenism. The Sandwich Islanders were born almost in a day into full membership of the Christian household, because there was nothing grand, nothing soul-appealing in their old faith. They had no history to prop their religion, which was only a mass of rubbish waiting to be swept away by the first rising tide of anything better. But it will be different with the Turks, remembering the magnificence of the early Saracen history, when their faith swept over Europe, and looking still, though humbled by Christian arms, with bigoted belief upon the banner of the Prophet. It cost the Church only twenty-two dollars a head to convert the Sandwich Islanders. In Turkey it costs over a thousand dollars. We must face the same difficulties in the other, even more ancient civilizations of India and China. The very excellencies of Brahminism, Buddhism and Confucianism—and they have many excellencies which even Christians may not deride—will hold their superstitions together for a long time.

But we must keep in mind certain other facts; such as these: For the amount expended and the laborers at work, the harvest in actual conversions on the foreign field is as three to one compared with the home field. The truth is vivid in its novelty to the heathen mind, and makes an impression upon him which our gospel-hardened hearts seldom feel; so that they need no Moodys to deliver the doctrines in audacious home-thrusts, or make them gleam with startling rhetoric; the truth itself is sufficiently sensational. Beside, the missionaries are not engaged exclusively in the work of seeking individual souls. They are undermining all that civilization. They are the ministers of Christian empire, though they carry no credentials from departments of state; and they are so regarded by the people. They are not little lanterns trying to light the "nations sitting in darkness;" they are little windows open toward the dawn, and the sun of righteousness is streaming through them. Then, since all truth is one, and all right and beneficence are scattered rays from the same infinite goodness, Christianity goes to the heathen world with all modern culture as its handmaidens. A Christian science is overthrowing the silly astronomy and geography of the Orient. A Calcutta horse railroad built, by Christian capitalists, has attained a right of way through all the caste system, so that those who, a few years ago would have gone round the Himilayas rather than walk with an under-caste man, sit complacently by his side in the public conveyance. Japan, which barred her doors to the fleets of the world, opened them at the beckoning gleam which shot across the Pacific from our Golden Gate. Christianity following in the wake of war, is pouring down through the passes of the Balkans and up through the Dardanelles.



You will observe this law often illustrated in the best progress; long preparation followed by sudden accomplishment. The waters wear imperceptibly the base of the cliff; it stands frowning for ages, the symbol of eternity to our short vision. But it falls all at once. Is there a barrier of heathenism that is not to-day shaking to its fall? The heaven has not gone through humanity, because humanity has not been together in one lump. But the separate kneading-troughs of the nations are worn out and are being thrown away. The world is fast becoming one. And when that unity shall have been accomplished within the bounds of commercial relations, common culture and habits of life, then it will not be long before it is one in religion. Nay, it will then appear that a subtle unity as the common object of the Saviour's love, was all along the inner force constraining the outward unity.

I am addressing men who, as members of this commercial metropolis are accustomed to take the far outlook in business and charitable matters; who invest to-day not merely for to-night's wages, but for the far future and distant enterprises, and whose coveted income is not for the gold that perishes but for the consciousness of having taken a part in the mighty progress of the world. I know that your response will be liberal when I appeal for this great enterprise, the evangelization of mankind which is outlined in prophecy and in your own avowed faith; assured both by the promise of heaven, and by the amazing success which is even now the acclamation of the nations which are rising to welcome it.

## What is Man? or the Scepticism of Science Considered.

### A SERMON,

PREACHED BY R. W. Dale, D.D., AUTHOR OF "LECTURES ON PREACHING" AND EDITOR OF "CONGREGATIONALIST," AT THE OPENING SERVICES OF UNION CHAPEL, LONDON.

*"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"—PSALM viii : 4.*

IF God is not mindful of our race, and has not been mindful of it in past ages, and is not mindful of it still, if He has not visited our fathers, and will certainly not visit us, then this building is but the monument of a ruined hope, and the enduring memorial of a glorious but tragic delusion. The delusion, indeed, has been shared in by generation after generation of the noblest of mankind. The hope may be described by others who do not share it, as originating partly in the hopes of man in the human heart, and partly in man's passionate and despairing discontent and dissatisfaction with his actual condition; but in its very presumption there is a moral grandeur so august, and in its appeal to the infinite love and wisdom and power of God, there is so pathetic a consciousness of weakness and ignorance and sorrow, that even those who think that they have discovered that the hope is vain and audacious may well regard it with sympathy and wonder, rather than with scorn, and may well look upon its extinction with pity and sorrow rather than with exultation. How are we to learn whether the ancient faith of our race, "that God is nigh at hand and not afar off," is a delusion or not? How are we to verify the hope, that it is possible for man to have access to God's presence? St. Paul declares that ever since the creation of the world the invisible things of God, even His power and Godhead, have been revealed in the material universe. But the influence on religious faith and hope of what we call "nature"—of the sun and the moon, the stars, and the mountains, and the seas—varies with different men. It varies with the varying temper and mood of the same man at different times. It is not always nature that makes it easier for us to believe that God is near. There are some aspects of nature which sometimes make it difficult to believe that there can be any real communion between the Creator and ourselves. Those of us who live in great cities are, perhaps, especially sensitive to the austere influences of the material universe. Its vastness—its grandeur—sometimes oppress us, lying among the ferns and the blossoming heather, with the foundations of the granite mountains beneath us, and their jagged peaks rising into the clouds above, or standing alone on the shore of some desolate sea unwhitened by a solitary sail, or lifting our eyes to the



heavens at night, knowing what David did not know, about the immense magnitude of the stars—about their number—and about the enormous distances which separate them from each other and from us—we are crushed by the sense of our insignificance. If we perished, what difference would it make in this stupendous universe? The mountains would stand firm—the tides would continue to ebb and flow—the stars would rise and set—the heather would still blossom, and the bracken would turn brown on the hill-side in the autumn, and the wild flowers would fill the plain with beauty in the spring—the shining brooks would continue to make their pleasant music just as before. What is man that God is mindful of him? and what is man that God should visit him?

Since our insignificance is strengthened by the permanence of God's material works, all our deepest thoughts have been expressed for us. Ages ago David felt the insignificance of man when compared with the greatness of God's material works, and expressed what he felt in the words of the text. And the writer of the book of Ecclesiastes felt the solemn pathos of the contrast between the brief life of man and the endurance of the material universe which is his temporary home. "One generation," he says, "passeth away and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever." It is true indeed that the earth itself has had its changes. The very elements have already "melted with fervent heat." We live over a great cemetery in which the stones still preserve millions upon millions of creatures that lived millions and millions of years ago. Water and fire have again and again changed the face of the globe. Even in recent times, down to our own days, changes just as startling have been going on. Here and there the cliffs have been rent and broken down in gigantic ruins of a disintegrated world; the coast has advanced on the sea and the sea has advanced on the coast. Yet how firm, and how strong, and how enduring the great forms of things appear when contrasted with the brief life of our race!

Nor is it merely the vastness and permanence of the objects of the material universe by which we are sunk into abysses of humiliation, in which we begin to be incredible that God should care for us. Our humiliation is deepened by the discovery that our own life is akin to the inferior forms of life around us—akin not only to the life of those animals in whose structure there are the closest analogies to our own—but akin to forms of life which look at first sight most remote from us. I come from the dust. The Book of Genesis told me so before science discovered it; and in the very lowest types of living creatures there are prophecies of the life by which I am animated. The gradations which separate rank from rank in this living hierarchy are so fine and so subtle that there seems no clear break

in the ascending scales. In the very highest there still survive affinities to the lowest. What right have I to separate myself from the creatures to which I am so closely related? What right have I to claim a different rank, and what right have I to expect a different destiny from the deer that browses on the plain, or the fish that flash in the burns, or the very grass and heather which cover the hills? I do not wonder that men whose whole strength is given to the investigation of the phenomena and laws of the material universe, should refuse to believe that man can be the origin of any specific interest on the part of God; and still further when they consider those imperial laws which cover with steadfast and relentless authority the whole range of existence with which we are acquainted, what presumption there seems to be in supposing that He from whom these laws derive their authority, will think of us, and care for us one by one! The Most High, as was said long ago by a great philosopher, does not seem to manifest Himself in particular volitions, but by universal and unchangeable laws. He appears to take no heed of the moral qualities of men, or of their weakness and helplessness. He sends His rain on the evil and on the good, and causes His sun to shine on the just and on the unjust. He destroys in the same storm the ships of an oppressive, tyrannical empire and the fishing boats of an obscure, harmless and industrious village. He smites with the same lightning the churches erected to His own honor, and hospitals for the alleviation of human misery, and the temples of false gods. He permits drought and famine and pestilence to desolate whole nations, so that the virtuous and the wicked perish in one common misery. What right, it may be urged, have we to claim any special remembrance from Him? What is man that God should be mindful of him, or the son of man that God should visit him? This is the gospel of science—a gospel harder, sterner and more appalling than the Law which came from the thunders and lightnings of Sinai. But is it true, or is it false? If it is true, then the most ardent hopes of man are extinguished, his dearest consolations are dried up, and he is stripped of those regal prerogatives which have been his chief glory and the inspiration of his noblest efforts. But is it true, or is it false? The truth which was in it David had a glimpse of. To him as to many of us the material universe and its majesty seemed to make it hard to believe that man could be the special object of the Divine thought and care. But instead of yielding to the grovelling fear David triumphed over it, turning with exulting confidence to his assurance that, after all, God is mindful of us, and that God does visit us. Let us see if we too cannot escape from the gigantic and oppressive shadows which the material universe sometimes throws upon us, and recover our faith in the animating truth that for us

"God is a God nigh at hand and not afar off." What are the pleas which are urged against the faith of which this building, in which we are assembled this morning, is the visible and permanent expression? What are these pleas worth? The whole world, we are told, in which we live is a mere speck in the universe, and it is said to be incredible that God should have any special care for it, or for those that inhabit it. And there are times when this plea seems to have a terrible force. But when I come to myself and recover from the power which the vast spaces of the material world exert over my imagination, it seems to me that there is a certain intellectual and moral vulgarity in attaching such importance to mere material magnitude. Jerusalem in its glory was but a hamlet compared with Babylon; and Florence when it was the home of genius, which shines only the brighter as the ages pass by, was a mere village compared with Peking. Who is so gross as to estimate the importance and dignity of a city by its magnitude? A sonnet of Milton's, an essay of Bacon's, a dialogue of Plato's, a volume of Newton's could be less easily spared than whole tons of the lumber that load the shelves of libraries. A few square inches of canvas show sometimes a more costly work than a picture which would cover the side of a house. No doubt the world is very small; but it does not follow that it contains nothing for which the great Father of us all can think it worth while to care. In a palace it may well happen that there are rooms hardly noticed by those who are confounded with the splendor and costliness of the great apartments—rooms hidden away in one of the wings, plainly furnished, insignificant in size, but which are more in the thought and heart of the king than all the rooms in the palace besides. These are the rooms in which his children play by day and sleep by night. Yes, the world is very small; but what if it is, if it is big enough to hold the children of God? God may be mindful of us, God may visit us and God may bless us. Material magnitude can have no weight in the discussion of this question.

The second plea is, that the life of man is too brief and momentary compared with the ages during which the universe has existed. No doubt—but science itself contains the reply to this argument. If the most recent and most fascinating theories of science are ultimately established, it will appear that all these ages have been necessary in order to render it possible for a creature like man to come into existence. Let the doctrine of evolution, on its purely scientific side, be true—instead of being overawed and humbled by the long succession of ages which have preceded me, I find in them new testimony to the greatness of my nature and the possible dignity of my position. They were necessary—these enormous stretches of time, which even the boldest have not dared to



measure, during which the original matter of the universe was consolidated into innumerable worlds; they were necessary—these vast geological periods of fire and of flood—of volcanic fury and of awful convulsions—of slow subsidence and swift upheaval; they were necessary, those dark, mysterious epochs of conflict between inferior types of life: they were all necessary, in order that at last I might have a clear heaven above my head and a firm earth beneath my feet, that I might have an atmosphere I could breathe, that I might have rivers to fish in and fields to plow, that I might have wood and iron for use, and flowers and pearls and precious stones for beauty; that I myself might have the brain, which is the organ of my thought, and a hand, which is the instrument of my will. I myself am the consummate result and the ripe fruit of these immense and awful ages. Do you appeal to them in order to sink me into insignificance? The more immense and the more awful they are, the stronger is the testimony to my dignity. They were all at work for me. For me they spent their strength. They are the slaves of my foot; they confess that I am their lord. It is possible, after all, that God may be mindful of me, and that God may visit me.

The third plea is, that we are encompassed by laws which take no heed of the personal differences of men, of the varieties of their character, or of the vicissitudes of their condition. Those laws determine our outward destiny—they control our very frame. To ask God to deal with us separately and apart, is to forget that He guides the whole universe by laws which are fixed, irreversible and irresistible. If this universal reign of law, which is asserted to be one supreme fact, was not a fact in relation to ourselves, let that be ignored. Let it be granted that in the physical universe (including in that my own physical nature) there are no signs or traces of what Malebranche termed “particular Divine volitions”; let it be granted that the magnitude and paths of the stars have been determined by fixed laws, that the structure and form of the mountains, and the course of rivers, and the outlines of continents, and the varying depths of the ocean are all the result of fixed laws; that the tint of every flower, and the veining of every leaf are the expression of fixed laws; that the color of my hair, the quality of my blood, the form of my limbs and the weight of my brain are all the final effects of the fixed working of laws which never felt the hand of the Creator since the origin of the universe. But science has asserted the authority of facts; so let us believe all the facts and then record the truth, that I am conscious of a power of choice—of moral freedom. My acts of virtue and my acts of vice are my own. You tell me of law, but there is another law, even the law of my moral nature. If the energy of my resolutions, my susceptibilities to special

temptations, my capacity for special forms of goodness, are affected to some extent—and to a large extent—by my physical nature, and much as law has contributed to mould me, yet in the heart of it all there is a mysterious freedom. I am not absolutely bound by the chain of necessity in my moral life. I am not like the tree or the flower, which has no choice whether it shall blossom and bear fruit or not. I am involved in this universal system of necessity—I touch it at every point—and yet in the centre and heart of my being I am free. Demonstrate, therefore, if you please—and I listen with eager heart to your demonstration—that as far back as is evidenced by the records of the existence of the world there are traces of the steadfastness and invariableness of natural law—that the law of the winds and of the forces of the universe which seem most wayward results from it and is absolutely under its control, as the rising and the setting sun ; let science take the words of the ancient psalmist, addressed to the living God, and show that there is no extravagance in using them of this mighty, universal and irrepressible power:—"Lord, Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me. If I ascend up into heaven Thou art there, and if I make my bed in hell Thou art there."—all this, instead of destroying my faith in the nearness of God and in the possibility of intercourse between me and Him, banishes the cloud, and annihilates the doubt which the discovery of the vastness of the universe had suggested. From the demonstration comes the assurance that in the midst of these tremendous and awful forces, in the midst of the almost infinitely varied thoughts of beauty and majesty, of glory and terror, by which you have endeavored to confound and humiliate me, I stand alone—alone, because I am invested with the unique, divine prerogative of freedom. While you have demonstrated that the whole universe is subjected to the authority of natural law, for me there is reserved an inviolable liberty. You have proved that I stand alone. Separate from nature, I may be akin to God. It is possible, after all, that God may be mindful of me, and that God may visit me ?

As for those modern thinkers who have renewed the old controversy respecting the moral freedom of man, they are engaged in a hopeless struggle. Their controversy is not with philosophy or with religion—their controversy is with the human race. The whole history of mankind is the proof of man's consciousness of freedom. The proof appears in the literature and in the language and in the laws of every nation in the ancient and in the modern world. We frankly acknowledge that law reigns all around us, and stretches over our border to the farthest limit, not only of our vision but of our thought. And yet so long as in our moral life we know that we are free, we can look up into the face of the living God with

the hope that He will deal with us separately and apart, that He Himself will care for us, and that there may be direct communion between us and Him. "With the hope"—yes, but only with the hope so long as we have only nature and the consciousness of our own moral freedom to assist us. Where did the Psalmist—where did the Jewish race—discover that heaven is so near to earth, and that God has so keen an interest in the life of man? David went to look at the shining heavens and asked, "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou visitest him?" Nature came between him and God until nature was transfigured by the power of a victorious faith, and then the heavens became the symbol of a diviner glory, and the deeps the echo of a mightier voice, and the wealth of celestial harvests the expression of a celestial love. But where did this faith come from? Where did David learn that "the Lord is nigh unto them that call upon Him"? The answer is to be found in the long series of supernatural revelations of which we have the record in the Jewish Scriptures. What I had intended to say on these ancient revelations I must dismiss. I would only remark how the characteristic religious life of the Jewish race is the growth of what was specifically supernatural in their history, and the flower would have been impossible without the root. We have received a fuller and richer revelation, anticipating, and perhaps augmenting as well as anticipating, the moral conditions of a more complex civilization and a more varied intellectual life. For if in these Christian times the light is more intense than it was, the shadows too are deeper. I suppose that there are men who have lost their faith in the very existence of a God, who but for the indirect influence on their moral and spiritual life of Christian civilization would have looked almost unmoved on the confusions and sorrows which have driven them into unbelief. But I repeat, we have a fuller and richer revelation than that which was the strength of David's faith; and in this pulpit week after week, as we trust, through many generations this revelation, assuring us that God has not forgotten or forsaken our race, will be illustrated. These walls will resound with songs of thanksgiving because Christ Jesus, the Eternal Word, the Brightness of His Father's glory and the Express Image of His Person, was made flesh and dwelt among men. The Incarnation is the central truth of the Christian faith, and is the final answer of God to the natural fear of the human heart that God must be too great to have any close and permanent relations to our race. For the doctrine of the Incarnation the Church had to maintain a fight, which was protracted through many centuries, against the Gnostic and Arian and Nestorian heresies. We in these last days should remember with deep and hearty gratitude the theologians who de-



fended it with incorruptible fidelity and heroic courage, as well as extraordinary intellectual subtlety and force. It is the habit of our times to speak contemptuously of the great doctrinal controversies of the Church, and to depreciate the spiritual importance of doubt. I wish to remark how, in the course of these controversies, these doctrines and facts have been imperiled which assure us that God is very near our race. Nothing is easier than to provoke unintelligent laughter by poor jests about the fanatical enthusiasm provoked in Alexandria between the parties of the *ὁμοουσιον* and the *ὁμοιουσιον* theory of our Lord's person. Nothing is easier than to assume a tone of impressive solemnity in order to rebuke the orthodox theologians of those days for their profane presumption in venturing with their logic and metaphysics into the mysterious depths of the Divine nature, and for endeavoring to frame definitions when they ought to have fallen prostrate in adoration. But, after all, let it never be forgotten that it is not the orthodox who were ultimately responsible for the presumption. They alone are charged with it, but they only pursued with the logic of orthodoxy the logic of heresy. The attempt was made to define the relations of the Son of God to the Father in such form as represented to the Church the great truth that Christ was indeed, and of a truth, incarnate God. The Athanasian theology was a metaphysical protection of the fundamental truth of the Christian religion against a metaphysical theory in which that truth was evaded or suppressed. The weapons by which the faith was defended were necessarily of the same kind as the weapons by which it was attacked. Both methods became obsolete—as obsolete as the ships and guns of the Armada, and the ships and the guns of the gallant sailors that held England against the power of Spain. The freedom of the inhabitants of England and the very existence of Protestantism on the continent of Europe were at stake when our fathers went out to meet the proud fleets of Philip. I, for my own part, am not disposed to speak of their rude vessels and their ruder guns with contempt; and I see in the metaphysics and logic of Athanasius and his comrades the best weapons which the Church in those centuries could handle for the defence and the security of the most precious truth contained in the Gospel of Christ. The controversy between the *ὁμοουσιον* and the *ὁμοιουσιον* was a controversy between those who affirmed and those who denied that Christ is God manifest in the flesh. Assuredly that is a controversy of infinite significance. In the metaphysics—the unintelligible metaphysics if you will—which formed so large a part of the theology of the early Church, and which is perpetuated in the ancient creeds, let it never be forgotten that the real and ultimate strife was not for a theory of the Divine Nature, but

for that perfect faith in God's nearness to man which the truth of the Incarnation inspires, and of which it is the sure and enduring defence. One form of heresy after another arose, and the struggle had to be maintained through century after century. It was successful at last—for a thousand years through Eastern and Western Christendom, notwithstanding transient and local defections, and is set forth in the hymn of St. Ambrose :

"Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ."

"Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father."

"When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb."

"When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

"Thou sittest at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father."

And, God helping us, we are resolved that the triumph of the ancient Church shall not be lost. They would be lost if we so preached about the revealed life of Christ, His humiliation, His sufferings, His death, as to accustom men to think only of His mortal weakness. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among men." But while we tell men of His hunger and thirst and pain, and His human affections, as exhibited by the temptation and His prayers, we must also teach them to recognize His glory—"The glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." I think I sometimes see in the writings even of those who claim for themselves exceptional fidelity to the orthodox and evangelical creed, unambiguous proof that they have a most inadequate sense of the exceeding majesty of the Son of God. They speak of Him with a fondling affection, which is inconsistent with true reverence. Their faith in His sympathy with them in their sorrow is most real; but there is no such awe as must come from a deep and vivid sense of His authority and the anticipation of the awful hour when He will judge the living and the dead. They are always "lying on His breast," but they never fall at His feet with wonder and with fear. There is a similar failure to recognize Him as the brightness of His Father's glory and the express image of His person in theologians of precisely an opposite school—theologians who acknowledge in their creed, it is true, the deity of our Lord, but who are so interested in His human development—so fascinated with the ethical perfection of His character—His tenderness with the infirmities of men, His merciful words to those who had grievously sinned, the charm of His home friendships, the tears which He shed over Jerusalem, and the agony which came upon Him in the garden—that they absolutely and habitually ignore the manifestations of the supernatural and Divine glory which

sometimes broke through the clouds in which He was for a time concealed. It is true that in His love for us and in His eagerness for our salvation He descended from the throne of God to the low level of our human life ; but while we are telling the story of His voluntary poverty it becomes us at least to remember that it was voluntary, and that for us He laid aside infinite wealth ; and that while, as they say, He took upon Him the form of a servant, it is for us to confess that He is Lord of all. While we look upon Him in the likeness of men, it is presumption to forget that He is Divine. Even when He humbles Himself and becomes obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, we who are watching His sufferings and shame are bound to remember that glory which He had with the Father before the world was. It is not for us to prolong His humiliation and to keep Him uncrowned. It is not for us to withhold, in these the days of His triumph, the homage which He voluntarily surrendered when He was visibly present among men. When we do we shall wrong Him, but we shall also wrong ourselves, and shall impair the force of the Gospel which is committed to us ; for the power of the Christian Gospel lies in the assurance that God has been mindful of men and visited men ; and it is a power which depends upon the earnestness and vigor with which we are able to assert the great truth, that Jesus Christ our Lord was manifest in the flesh.

The ultimate spiritual question at issue in the controversies of the early Church on the person of Christ and the Trinity was, whether God is nigh at hand or whether He is a God only afar off. The same question was at issue in the controversies of the Reformation. Those who have built this Church claim to be the true heirs and representatives of the Reformers. We are not, indeed, so presumptuous or so arrogant as to assert that we Congregationalists are alone, of all Englishmen, true to the genius of the great movement which gave new inspiration and new freedom to the religious, to the social, to the intellectual and to the political life of the northern nations of Europe in the sixteenth century, and which renewed the energy and arrested the corruption even of those nations which resisted it. We recognize and honor the fidelity of those clergy and laymen of the Anglican Church who, under adverse conditions, and harassed by great difficulties and perplexities, are endeavoring to protect the Protestantism of the Establishment. We rejoice in the vigor of great communities outside the Establishment, in which the fires of generous Protestant zeal are burning in all their ancient ardor. We love the Baptists and the Presbyterians of England ; but we claim our place in the ranks of those who are most faithful to the traditions of the



Reformation, and we accept the responsibilities which the claim implies.

The struggle of the Reformation did not begin with Luther, and Luther did not carry it to its final issue. We shall fight with more courage and energy for the victory, which still lies perhaps in the remote future, when we see clearly that Protestantism is a remote testimony, on the one hand, to the infinite condescension of God and to the mercy of God ; and, on the other, a vindication of the noblest prerogatives which God in His goodness has conferred upon mankind. It is not merely the splendor of the heavens, or the permanence of the material universe, contrasted with his own insignificance and with the brief limits of his mortal life, which sometimes makes it hard, and almost impossible, for the thoughtful man to believe that there can be any free intercourse between himself and God. The consciousness of guilt and of moral infirmity oppresses him. How can we hope that God will come near to us in our sin ? How can we dare, while our sin is upon us, to draw near to God ? If it is possible for us by our penitence and by our self-inflicted pains to be successful—if by conflict with our inward passions and by lavish charity we can atone in some sense for our past offences and show the sincerity of our amendment—then, perhaps, after long and weary years of severe and austere living, it may be that the light of the Divine presence will shine round about us, and we may have the perfect rest which comes from the assurance that God is at peace with us. Luther said : “ No, God is mindful of you already. He is eager to visit you. He does not condemn you to pass cheerless years in austere self-discipline and incessant conflict with temptation before He is willing to make you glad with the assurance of His forgiveness and His love. At the best there is pain before you. At the best there is severe effort and battle and storm, but He comes to your side at the beginning of it all instead of at the end. You are to be justified not by works, which it may take you years to get through, but by faith, which may be the act of an hour or a moment. As soon as you confess His authority and trust in His love He will absolve you for Christ’s sake from all your sins, and absolve you without qualification and without reserve. He will reveal to you absolution, that the knowledge of it may make you happy and strong. He will be your ally in the great battle with sin, and will fight by your side from the very first instead of leaving you to fight it out alone, and then receiving you into His favor when the battle is almost over and victory almost won.” This is what Luther meant, and this is what the Reformers meant, by the great doctrine of “ Justification by Faith.” That doctrine is an answer to man’s natural fear, that while he is conscious of sin God will not come near to

him. The doctrine may have been expressed in forms which seem to us incredible and intolerable, but half Europe knew what Luther and the Reformers meant. They saw in it a Divine message, which they hailed with rapturous joy. Rome had been temporizing with the natural fears suggested by consciousness of sin, Luther declared war against the fears as well as against the sin, and told the world that Christ had died—the Just for the unjust—that He might bring, not saints, but sinners to God. The whole of the Protestant controversy in the sixteenth century was a struggle for the same principle involved in the controversy on the doctrine of Justification by Faith. From this principle the controversy in our time derives all its dignity and all its interest. The question still at issue is, whether God is a God nigh at hand or a God afar off. The secular life appears to many men a thing unclean. They think God may be with the monk and with the nun, whose nights and days are spent in seclusion and prayer, but not with a man or woman in the family, not with the manufacturer in his works, not with the tradesman in his shop, not with the lawyer in his office, not with the physician in the sick-room, not with the artist in his studio, not with the statesman in the agitation and excitement of political conflict; or they would say He was with them, but not with them in the same sense, and not in a communion so intimate and close. Rome makes a shameful concession to this distrust by drawing a distinction between the secular and the religious life. She invites the religious, who would live in the light of God, to devote themselves to celibacy and forsake the world. Rome takes sides with the fears which spring from unbelief, and tells men that they may have the intercession of the Virgin and the saints. When the consciences of men shrink from the immediate presence of Him whose law they have broken, Rome permits confession of sin to a priest, and the lips of a priest pronounce the absolution from sin. David's soul is troubled with perplexed questions on the ways and the will of God, to which it can find no answer. It despairs of discovering an answer. Rome, instead of assuring those who will listen for themselves to the word of Christ to invoke for themselves the illumination of the Holy Ghost, when they will receive the Divine teachings of the teacher necessary for their personal faith and holy living, confirms their despair and tells all Christendom to wait for the decisions of Councils and of Popes. Against all these compromises with want of faith, and against all these concessions to unbelief, in the name of God's mercy and God's condescension to mankind we vehemently protest. These are not speculative errors—they touch the very heart of the Christian Gospel. They strip us of the prerogatives which God Himself has conferred, and they close up the direct access to God which

has been opened for all men by Him who is **the way unto the Father.**

But let us not forget (and with this observation I must close) that the God who, as we contend, is near to men as a living God, He is near, and yet He may surround himself with clouds and thick darkness and may be altogether hidden from us. The Calvinistic doctrine of the Divine sovereignty, though defined in terms which revolt the moral sense of most of us—it is so hard and stern—does nevertheless express a truth which is essential to a just conception of God and a just conception of our relations to Him. He is a living person and not an unconscious force of “that power not ourselves which maketh for righteousness.” The free access of one person to another depends upon the voluntary action of both. It is not enough that we draw nigh unto God—God Himself must draw nigh unto us. It is possible to think of God as though He were like a ray of sunlight, so that we have only to throw back the shutters and open the windows of the soul, and we shall, as a matter of course, be filled with the fresh wind and with the glory of heaven. The dogma of the Divine sovereignty was in its essence a formal denial of this derogatory conception of man's Maker. It affirmed that God too has His will, that His acts in relation to mankind are controlled and directed by Him. In the material universe His will may manifest itself in forces which are constant and invariable, and those who search for the thought of God in the inferior region of His activity may find no trace of His free personality. In the spiritual universe He is a person in relation to persons, and our freedom is the imperfect symbol of His. There is nothing arbitrary in his volitions, but it remains true that His volitions are free. No blind necessity constrains Him. The blessings which He confers are not like the unconscious earth. They are the voluntary gifts of infinite love. If the brightness of His presence shines upon us, that brightness does not come like the splendors of the rising sun, but as the effect of His own voluntary revelation of His glory.

There is an atheism of which the Church may be guilty, and which is not less fatal, but in many respects infinitely more tragic than the atheism of speculative unbelief. Against that atheism I warn you this morning. It is not enough that you assemble within these walls. Your hearts should be melted and penetrated by the pathos of the prayers in which you confess your sins and invoke the Divine pity and acknowledge the Divine goodness, or that you should be excited by the vehement passion of sacred song. Do you believe that the loving God listens to your prayers? Do you expect Him to accept your worship and your praise? It is not enough that the preacher should illustrate the Divine Law. Do you expect God Himself to reveal His authority to the conscience and incline your hearts to



obey His commandments? It is not enough that your sorrow should be soothed by listening to tender words respecting the Divine consolations, unless you have faith that God Himself is near to console you. It is not enough that you should hear eloquent and impassioned declarations on the Divine mercy, unless God be present to forgive. You can have no enduring courage and strength in hearing beautiful declarations that God is near to you in your weakness and peril. As a fact, is God mindful of you and does He visit you? If the Church relies for all moral and spiritual good on the reflex influence upon its moral and spiritual life of its own spiritual acts, it is in danger of renouncing its faith in the living God. This stately and beautiful building is set apart to-day to sacred uses. No mystic glory symbolizes the Divine presence within its walls; nor do we believe that there is any sense in which God dwells in this place in which He does not dwell in the Christian home or in the house of business where His authority is supreme, or in the hall where statesmen meet to legislate for the secular affairs of the nations, if only they confess that He is King of kings and discharge the duties of government in the eye of God and for His glory. But God will be here whenever you meet together in the name of Christ. His presence is assured not to a sacred building, but to sacred persons and this church is erected for those who do believe that God is mindful of men, and that He is nigh unto them that call upon Him and who here meet together to invoke and rejoice in His presence.

## The Second Advent.\*

### A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN TORONTO AND ELSEWHERE, BY THE Rev. John G. Manly,  
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EVERY advent of Christ is redemptive. Whenever or however He comes into the world, He comes to redeem. This is His one purpose and work. He comes to seek and to save that which was lost ; He comes to destroy the works of the devil ; He comes to redeem us from all iniquity. We cannot, therefore, understand any advent of Christ without understanding the great Redemption to which it belongs.

*We cannot understand Redemption without distinguishing between the Priestly work of Christ and His Kingly work.*

The prophet Zechariah foreshows Christ as "a priest upon his throne," both a priest and a king, or a priestly king. So He is often denoted in the New Testament. In the first chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, He appears first as "our priest, who by Himself," by the sacrifice of Himself, as both priest and victim, "purged our sins," and then, as our king, "sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." The right hand of God is not a place but a state or condition, the state of highest honor, authority and power, the state of royal glory. Farther on in the same chapter the Father addresses the Son as God and King, or as Divine King, saying: "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." In the second chapter, Christ appears as King, "crowned with glory and honor," who previously, as Priest, was "made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that He by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." But nowhere does this distinction so luminously and impressively appear as in the second chapter of the epistle to the Philippians: "Christ Jesus, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant," a priestly servant, "and was made in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient," as priest, "unto death, even the death of the cross." No words could better denote Christ's priestly office and work than these. But what did He become in the second place, for our redemption, as the result and reward of His priestly humiliation and servitude? He became King. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name ; that, at the name of

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\*This lecture, revised for this publication, is a popularized condensation of a work on the Second Coming of Christ which the author is preparing for publication.

Jesus every knee should bow ; of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." No words could better denote than these the kingly exaltation and glory of Christ. As our Priest, He died for us, to ransom us ; as our King, He reigns over us, to regenerate us. He died for us to procure salvation ; He reigns over us to bestow it ; and accordingly, " we have redemption" provided " in His blood, the forgiveness of sins," and we have " repentance and remission of sins" bestowed on us as the royal gifts of Him who is " exalted a Prince and a Saviour" or a kingly Saviour. Christ sacerdotally died for us, and we may be saved ; when He sovereignly lives in us we are saved. " For to this end Christ both died and rose and revived," as our Priest, " that He might be Lord," royal Lord, " both of the dead and living," that is, of all mankind — of the dead to raise them, of the living to save them, ruling with His two-edged sword and iron sceptre.

*We cannot understand the course of Divine redemption or the redemptive history of the world, unless we distinguish between the Priestly age or era and the Kingly.*

However long the world of mankind has lasted or however long it may last, it consists of only these two ages. So Christ himself distinguishes "this age and that about to come." So Paul distinguishes between "this age and that which is about to come." The right rendering of the word *μελλω*, in both these parallel passages, and in the one hundred and ten instances of its occurrence, is "about." The first era is the Night of the world, the second is the Day ; the first is the Winter, the second is the Summer ; the first is Priestly, the second Kingly. The first, according to our common chronology, lasted about 4,000 years—from the beginning of human sin in Eden to the end of Judaism at Jerusalem ; the second extends from the end of Judaism to the end of the world. In the first everything was priestly, in the second everything is kingly.

So important is priesthood, so truly is our redemption built on it, so necessary is it that we should understand it, that God took 4,000 years to teach the world priesthood, and to prepare for the priestly coming of His Son. "From Adam to Moses," for about 2,500 years, priesthood was *common* ; there was no priestly caste or class, but every man was his own priest and the priest of his own family and household. Wherever he roamed or resided he built his own altar, kindled his own fires, slew his own victims, offered his own sacrifices. So Cain and Abel were their own priests ; so Noah and Job, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, were their own priests. The commonness of priesthood made every man familiar with it, as God intended.



But at the end of the Patriarchal period, God made *priesthood special*, for the special education of the world in priesthood, and to make special preparation for the appearance of His priestly Son. He chose the Hebrew people to be to Him "a kingdom of priests," restricting to the tribe of Levi the priestly office and work, and to the family of Aaron the priestly chieftainship; and so establishing a great priestly nationality for about 1,500 years. As the Old Testament is the book of priesthood, so Judaism is the system of special priesthood. Because everything in it was priestly no provision was made for a king in Israel, or for a president, chief magistrate or supreme executive. The priest was uppermost, foremost and central. To him was given the law, that he might teach it to the people, for every priest is a prophet (or teacher), though every prophet is not a priest; and so "the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and the people should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of Jehovah of hosts." The priest conducted the public worship and offered all the sacrifices; and to him the nation was to come in every exigency to learn the will of God. For the first four hundred years, from Moses to Saul, the Hebrews were governed by priests and judges; for the next five hundred years, from Saul to the Babylonish captivity, by priests and kings; and for the remaining six hundred years, from captivity to the desolation, by priests and princes, or by priests and elders, in the grand council of the Sanhedrim. The Idumean royalty was but the intrusive shadow of imperial Rome.

Judaism was extant and authoritative, for the Hebrews till A.D. 70. Christ Himself observed it, as the fulfillment of righteousness; the apostles and all the Jewish Christians kept the law, as in the observance of the passover and in Paul's circumcision of Timothy; the Epistle to the Hebrews, written a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem, denotes it as operative, but as "waxing old and ready to vanish away," as "shaken" and "soon to be removed"; for "He taketh away the first," not has taken it, "that He may establish the second." In the year 70 it departed as a scroll, vanished away with a great noise, disappeared as the old heavens and the old earth, to make way for the new heaven and the new earth of Messiah's kingdom.

The end of the Ritualistic era is the beginning of the Royal; and the end of the Royal is the end of Death, for He must reign till Death, the last enemy, is destroyed. When the priestly era was completed by the dismissal and demolition of priestly Judaism, the kingly era of Christianity began; and when the kingly era is completed by the dismissal and destruction of death, the original Theocratic rule shall be resumed forever. But now Messiah is king, and everything is Christo-

cratic. The king is on His holy hill in the mountain of His house, ruling in the midst of His enemies, till every foe becomes His footstool. As everything was priestly in the first age so everything is royal now. Priesthood was the basis and preparation; kingdom is the building and perfection.

*We cannot understand the advents of Christ, unless we distinguish between His Priestly advent and His Kingly advent.*

Because about one-thirtieth of the New Testament relates to the Messianic advents, many readers are perplexed and bewildered, erroneously supposing that there are many advents; whereas there are really only two personal advents. The first was the priestly, in the last century of the priestly era, according to Heb. 9: 26-28: "Now," in our lifetime or generation, "once," for Christ comes only once as priest, "in the end of the world," not the human world, for 1,800 years have since elapsed, but the end of the Jewish world or priestly age in whose last century Christ "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" or to be "once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that seek for Him shall He appear the second time," not as priest, but as king, and therefore "without sin," without an offering for sin, "unto salvation," the actual accomplishment or bestowal of salvation.

When Christ came into the world the first time he came not as king but as *priest*. The four gospels are the memoirs of His advent, and to understand them one must study them throughout as the memoirs of a priest and not a king. "I came not," He says, "to judge the world," as its king, "but to save the world" as its propitiating priest. Every king is a judge, though every judge is not a king; and to disclaim judgment is to disclaim royalty. "The Son of man is not come to be ministered unto," as a king, "but to minister" as the priestly servant of the Father, "and to give His life as a ransom for many." "I can of my own self do nothing," is the language of servitude, not sovereignty. "My doctrine is not Mine," as if I were the royal *fons et origo*, "but His that sent Me." "I came not to do My own will," like a king, "but the will of Him that sent Me." My Father is greater than I," greater now than I; by His pleasure and My free choice, though I was "equal with God," and though I shall be one with Him in kingly power and glory; but now I am His priestly servant, and therefore officially and practically less.

With this the whole Gospels agree, and by this many perplexities and difficulties of the Gospels are explained. Because Christ came not into the world the first time as king, but as servant, to be humbled and of no reputation; He came to the stable and the manger, where born kings and princes never came, to a poor carpenter's family, to be Himself a carpenter, to be homeless and poor, to be despised and rejected, mis-

judged and murdered. And so He avoided and prevented all royal honor and fame. He charged the men that He healed not to make Him known, sometimes leading the patient out of the town to be healed privately. He charged His confessing disciples not to make Him known, and He charged the three not to make known the Father's recognition of Him on the Mount till His resurrection, that is, till the completion and attestation of His sacrifice. As a priestly servant in the world He declined to be called God. The chief places in His coming kingdom were not then His to give. The time of the kingdom's commencement was not known to Him for publication. His mission was only to His own priestly nation—the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but the cleansing of the temple belonged to Him, as the great high priest. He rode into Jerusalem, not in the possession and exercise of kingly power, but as a practical and proleptical parable of His coming kingship; and in the same sense He avowed His proximate royalty to Pilate. He was born to be a king by the power of truth, but the time of his priestly service and death was not the time of His royal power and praise. “Jesus was not yet glorified.” He was first to suffer many things in His priesthood, and then to enter into His kingly glory. He was first to be sacerdotally crucified through weakness, and then regally live by the power of God. He was first to be hieratically perfected by sufferings, and then hierarchically exalted to save. The Kingly Captain of our salvation was first made perfect as the priest by sufferings.

When Christ comes into the world the second time He comes not as priest but as *King*; He comes to be sovereign, not servant; He comes for glory and not for shame, in power and not in weakness, in publicity and not in concealment, for the world and not Judea; He comes with the sceptre and not the sin-offering; He comes not to purchase redemption but bestow it; not to lay the foundation in sacerdotal sorrow, but to erect the fabric with sovereign strength.

Christ *became* king at His ascension. So the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches us. “*When* He had made purification of sin, He sat down [as king] at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Forty days after the Divine demonstration at His resurrection He went to the Father that had sent Him in His priesthood, for the presentation of His priestly sacrifice and for regal investiture. Then He was crowned with glory and glory. Then the Father said to Him: “Sit thou at my right hand,” that is, be thou redemptive King, “till I make thy foes thy footstool.” That was the great coronation day. Just on the eve of this, and with evident reference to it, He said: “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.” So the evangelist reports: “After the Lord had



spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God." So Peter proclaimed: "Exalted by the right hand of God," according to the one hundred and tenth psalm, and "made both Lord and Christ," made Christic Lord or Messianic King.

Christ is *supreme* King. Paul tells us in the fifteenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians that the Father has put all things under the Son, except Himself. Are there then two kings, the Father and the Son; and two kingdoms, the kingdom of the Father and the kingdom of the Son? No; for the Father and the Son are one. "The Father is in Me," says Christ, "and I in Him." "All things that the Father hath are Mine." "All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them." "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." His name is above every name; and in all things He has the pre-eminence. Angels and principalities and powers are made subject to Him. He is the many-crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. His authority is supreme, His power unlimited, and His judgment final.

*We cannot understand the two advents of Christ, unless we distinguish between the visibility of His Priesthood and the invisibility of His Kingdom.*

*The Priesthood of Christ was visible*, because He had a visible sacrifice to offer, and because for the relief of the world His sacrifice must be seen and testified. The sacrifice of Christ was His flesh for the life of the world; and so He came and lived and died visibly. He was born in Bethlehem in the days of Herod the king, and was seen of the shepherds and the wise men. He was visibly brought up in the family of Joseph and Mary, in the northern city called Nazareth. He visibly labored as a carpenter till He was thirty years old. He was visibly baptized of John in the Jordan; and then visibly exercised His priestly ministry for upwards of three years. He visibly died at Jerusalem, the true centre then of the world, in the face of the Jewish nation that was assembled for the passover, and in the presence of the world's great Roman power. Whatever event of history is denied or questioned, the death of Jesus can never be doubted. The world condemned Him, crucified Him, and saw Him die.

*But the kingdom of Christ is an invisible kingdom.* "The kingdom of God is within you—cometh not with outward show—is not meat and drink like sensible priestly Judaism, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit is invisible (for the world beholdeth Him not), and so are the holiness and happiness in Him that constitute the Divine kingdom. "The kingdom of God is not in word," in optical marks or aural indications, though these are eminent

instruments; "but in power" the invisible power of the invisible Spirit coming upon us. The kingdom of God is a "mystery," the mystery of a hidden and Divine life, like the life of the buried seed or the human birth; and as such unseen. "My kingdom," says Christ, "is not of the world:" which means that it is of unworldly nature and unworldly origin, and therefore spiritual and Divine. "If my kingdom were of this world," in its nature, if it were like the world, sensible and carnal, "my servants would fight" with worldly weapons; but "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal," since "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh." "Now is my kingdom not from hence," not of worldly origin or nature. The subjects of the kingdom "walk by faith and not by sight;" and the life which they live in the flesh is a life of unseen faith in the Son of God. "Flesh and blood," or carnal nature, "cannot inherit the kingdom of God." It cannot be known or attained through the senses; it cannot be discerned by eyes or ears of flesh; it cannot be grasped by hands of flesh or taken by physical force. It is invisible, like hidden heaven, hidden treasure, hidden seed and secret growth.

The Head of this invisible kingdom is *an invisible King*. He has been invisible ever since His ascension, and is so permanently. So He forewarned His disciples: "A little while," of a few hours between My last supper and My death, "and the world beholds Me no more. . . . A little while," of forty days between My resurrection and ascension, "and ye," My disciples, "behold Me not . . . I go to My Father" at My ascension "and ye behold Me no more. . . . And now," from my decease, "I am no more in the world. . . . The days are coming in which ye shall desire to behold, but shall not see one of the days of the Son of Man" in His visibility. So Paul understood and taught: "Though we have known Christ after the flesh," seen Him with our eyes of flesh, heard Him with our ears of flesh, handled Him with our hands of flesh, "yet now, henceforth," now forever, "know we Him no more" through flesh and sense.

As the kingdom and the King are invisible so must be also the Kingly or second *advent*. This is what Christ means by His advent in clouds. Clouds are the concealing clothing of the Deity and the dust of His feet. "Clouds and darkness are round about Him." He came of old into Egypt unseen, riding upon a swift cloud. His Kingly return, according to the angels, was to be like His departure. He left in a cloud, and He was to come back in a cloud. He left personally, and He was to return personally. He left at Jerusalem, and He was to return at Jerusalem. It is a mistake to say that He left visibly and was to return visibly. He was necessarily visible before He left, but immediately on leaving He

became invisible, for a cloud received Him out of their sight.

The invisibility of the Kingly advent is taught us in the ninth of Hebrews, by the contrast of *οπτομαι* with *φανερωω*. The first of these verbs occurs fifty-seven times in the New Testament, and in fifty-three instances signifies either spiritual sight or supernatural appearance. Whenever our incorporeal knowledge of Christ is meant, in contrast with corporeal, it is denoted by the word *οπτομαι*. So it is in Heb. 9: 26, 28: "Now once, in the end of the age He appeared (*πεφανερωται*)" the first time, "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself . . . and to them that look for Him shall He appear (*οφθησεται*)" the second time, without sin, unto salvation." The first coming is indicated by a word that means to bring to light, show, display; but the second coming is denoted by a word that means incorporeal knowledge or supernatural appearance in fifty-three instances out of fifty-seven, and that always means spiritual knowledge in the six instances of its contrast.

Whenever the clouded or concealed coming of Christ is meant, it is denoted, in all the second six instances, by *οπτομαι*. So in the beginning of the Apocalypse: "Behold He comes with clouds and every eye shall see him," *οφεται αυτον*, shall spiritually see Him, for the clouded One could not otherwise be seen.

This invisibility is what is meant by Christ's second coming "as a thief in the night." Not unexpectedness, for Christ was expected, as all the epistles show; not suddenness, for very often a thief comes slowly, to be sure of his way and to detect danger; but invisibility in the darkness of the night. Christ and His day came unseen as a thief in darkness. Judaism visibly departed, Christianity invisibly began.

This invisible Kingly advent is what Christ means by coming to His disciples, to receive them to Himself in the prepared places; this is what He meant in answer to Judas the loyal, by the coming of the Father and Himself (as one) to them that love Him; and this is what He means by coming to His disciples that they might not be orphans. In all these expressions He means an invisible coming, not the first but the second, not the priestly but the regal.

Well, then, it may be asked, shall we never see Christ? Never in the flesh. Out of the flesh we shall see Him; in our new resurrection body we shall see Him; but after the flesh or through the flesh Christ will never more be known.

Neither the Church nor the world shall ever see Christ corporeally. However much men may desire it, they can never again see one of the priestly days of the Son of man's visibility. Neither at the end of the world nor at any time before shall either saints or sinners see Christ with fleshly eyes. Flesh



and blood can neither discern nor inherit the kingdom of God. "Out of my flesh," or free from my flesh as Job says, "shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold not another."

*The Second advent of Christ was near the First.*

*Old Testament prophecy shows this.* The two advents are spoken of as so near each other that sometimes the one is mentioned first and sometimes the other; and John the Baptist, under the name of Elijah, is foretold as the harbinger or herald, not of a lowly suffering Priest but of a just and mighty King. If Christ has not regally come for 1,800 years, or will not come till the end of the world, how could the Baptist be His royal forerunner?

*The New Testament predicts a speedy Second advent.* "The Son of man is about to come in the glory of His Father with His angels." "If that evil servant say in His heart—My lord *delayeth* His coming." "When ye see these things come to pass," as signs of the Jewish dissolution, "know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand," "I go to prepare a place for you, . . . and I will come again and receive you unto Myself. . . . I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you. . . . I go away and come again unto you. . . . A little while and ye shall see Me," *οψεσθε με*, shall spiritually see Me in My kingdom." "*Μαραν αθα*, the Lord is coming." "The Lord is at hand." "For yet a little while and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." "Be patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. . . . The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. . . . The Judge," Jesus the Judge, "standeth at the door." "Behold, He comes with clouds." "The time is at hand. . . . That which ye have hold fast till I come. . . . Behold I come quickly. . . . Behold, I stand at the door and knock," about to make My royal entrance. "The devil knoweth that he hath but a short time" till the coming of the Kingdom. "Behold, I come as a thief. . . . Behold, I come quickly. . . . The time is at hand. . . . And behold, I come quickly. . . . Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." This prophetic vein of a speedy second advent runs through the whole New Testament. Some great change was about to take place; the priestly age was about to be followed by the kingly, the King Himself was coming, and was even at the door.

*Still more particularly the New Testament announces the propinquity of the two advents in one and the same generation.*

In the 24th chapter of Mathew and parallel passages, our Lord, in answer to His disciples, shows first the signs of His coming to displace Judaism and establish His kingdom, and then declares the time: "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled." The precise

and definite phrase, "this generation," occurs about twenty times in the New Testament, and always means the people then living. Any other sense involves absurdity. Christ was foretelling the dispersion or passing away of the Jewish nation, and could not say: "This nation shall not pass away till this nation passes away." Dr. Alexander, in his commentary on Mark, says: "Unless we forge a meaning for the word in this place, which is not only unexampled elsewhere, but directly contradictory to its essential meaning everywhere, we must understand our Lord as saying that the cotemporary race or generation, that is, these then living, should not pass away or die till all these prophecies had been accomplished." That is, should not die till the Son of Man came to dismiss and demolish Judaism, and bring in His glorious kingdom, in its fullness of power and blessing. The two advents belong, therefore, to the last generation of Judaism.

*The work of the two apostles interspaced the two advents.* When Christ had instructed the twelve to preach the Gospel to their countrymen, not to the Gentiles, for whom Paul was to be the apostle, he said, "Verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." Their field was Palestine and the Dispersion; the time for their work was not more than forty years from the ascension to the Jewish desolation, and before this work could be finished, the Son of man should come. This exactly agrees with His coming in the last generation of Judaism.

*One lifetime concatenated the two advents.* "The Son of man is about to come in the glory of his Father with His angels; and then," as kingly Judge, "He shall reward every man," after death, "according to his works." But how soon shall this regal advent occur, and this regal judgment begin? Listen: "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom." Nothing can be clearer, plainer or more decisive than these words. Here, as in the two last cases, it is "the Son of man" that is to come; not the Divine nature merely, not the spirit of Christ merely, not an act of Providence, but the Son of man Himself, which means the humanity as well as Divinity, for the two are inseparable. It is in His kingdom, not His lowly priesthood or even as transfigured, the Son of man is to come. He is to come in the lifetime of His hearers—not of all, for all would not live forty years, but of some. This time exactly agrees with the choral extent of "this generation" and of the apostolic work.

*The lifetime of John connected the two advents.* When Peter was forewarned of his own death he inquired about the future of his friend John, and received this answer: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me."

This does not mean that John should never die, but it does mean that he should not die till Christ came; and as John died in the city of Ephesus, some time in the first century, Christ must have previously come. He came in the year seventy, and every apostle but John died beforehand. John was one of the "some standing here that should not taste of death till they saw the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." Christ's coming, in John's lifetime, exactly agrees with His coming in the last generation of Judaism before the completion of the apostolic work, and before the death of all the great Teacher's hearers.

*The facts compare with the foresight exactly and thoroughly.* After about forty centuries, according to the common chronology, Christ came into the world the first time, in His priesthood. For about forty months, He exercised His priestly ministry, from the baptism of the Jordan to the baptism of His death. For about forty hours, He was numbered with the dead—from His crucifixion to His resurrection. For forty days He was with His disciples, from the resurrection to the ascension, preparing them for His kingdom. For forty years He watched and waited for Israel's submission, and created the incipience of His kingdom from His ascension and coronation till the year seventy. At His ascension He went as a Priestly "Nobleman" into a far country, to receive a kingdom and to return; and in the year seventy He came back the King. Then the cup of Jewish iniquity was full; and the king was wroth, and sent forth his Roman armies and destroyed these murderers, and burned up their city. Then sensible Judaism passed away with a great noise and a fervent heat, and the invisible Christocracy began without outward show. Two things were necessary to the completion and coming of the Kingdom: the removal of the priestly Jewish antecedent and the presence of the King; and both these took place in the same year. Judaism was "ordained by angels," but "unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the" Messianic "world about to come, whereof," in all this epistle, "we speak"; and so with the visible Priesthood and all its appurtenances, passed away the visibility of angels and all the apparitions.

Perhaps the exegetical harmony of some Biblical passages with the doctrine of a past second advent may seem to some impossible or difficult. Difficult it may be, but not impossible; for what is impossible to some is possible to others. Every man is not an exegete, as every man is not a poet, painter or sculptor. "Every man hath his proper gift of God." Exegetical success, in the labyrinthine or alpine walks of the Bible is not only a specialty but a progress. What has been impossible will some time be achieved, as all the Bible is given to be understood. But the appearance of such difficulty or impossibility



must not prevent us from taking what is verified. We should rejoice in all we find, and labor for the rest. The primary question is not how the priority of the second advent can be reconciled with every Biblical reference, but whether it is Biblical truth. All truth is harmonious; all Biblicism is one. If the actual accomplishment of the second advent is a fact we have no choice but to hold it fast in faith, and follow on to know its perfect harmony.

The logical and practical issues of the initiative Kingly advent must not affright or confound us. The Hebrew people of God ignored the lowly Priestly advent and accepted the lofty regal advent. The scribes of Christ's day said that Elijah was yet to come, when He was come already. If the church has long been blind to the actual advent of the King, we must not be blind also. If many Christians erroneously look for a visible second advent, or for an advent delayed for 1800 years or to the end of the world, for a King that tarries long, instead of coming quickly, for a kingdom without a King, which is not a kingdom, for a kingdom localized at Jerusalem, as specialized in Palestine, instead of catholicized in a cosmical Brotherhood—why should this confound us? Christendom has had its mediæval right of a thousand years; and has still its baptized heathenism, its reviewed Judaism, its huge apostacies, its infantile weakness, its fragmentary divisions and diversities, its superimposed ecclesiasticisms; but the things to be removed are shaken, and the world of our God shall stand forever. If an accomplished advent *modifies* the faith of the resurrection, the judgment and the millennium, let it be so. If it changes some customary exposition and revolutionizes eschatology, what then? Truth is great and shall prevail. "Buy the truth and sell it not." "What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord." "Unto the King of the ages, the immortal, the invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

## John Morrissey; or, Is Romanism a Safe Guide?

### A SERMON

By Justin D. Fulton, D.D., IN THE CENTENNIAL BAPTIST CHURCH,  
BROOKLYN.

*"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing of the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation."*—Psalm xxiv: 3-5.

"THE events of John Morrissey's life have, under the impetus to inquiry and reminiscences which his illness, now ended by death, has provoked, become well known. It is not the least singular part of his life that he died in the reception and recognition of the ministrations of religion, and that the next statement, after his entire willingness and confidence in death, is one which says that the bulk of his property consists in his interest in the gambling place at Saratoga."

Thus begins one of the ablest and, because able, one of the most dangerous editorials I have read concerning the death of the pugilist, the gambler, the horse racer and the Senator of the State of New York. It brings before us at the outset the question, Did he receive the ministrations of religion, and is Romanism a safe guide? If the death of Morrissey shall bring this question to the light and cause it to be discussed and weighed in the light of history, then the event of the hour and the eulogies pronounced by Senators, some of whom profess to be Christians, on a man whose life begun as a pugilist and ended as a gambler; a life illumined by rare courage, great practical sense, ruled by the code of honor which is the glory of the sporting world; a life utterly destitute of those characteristics which make a man a safe guide for youth to follow—if this shall be seen and comprehended, then he shall do more good by his departure than he ever accomplished by his stay. The mists of error fill the air with fog. Truth is hidden. The superstitions of the dark ages are coming in upon us like a flood, and men who ought to be in better business give welcome to error. Why these eulogies, which, of right, belong only to the truth?

If the reason for these tributes of regard be sought, it will be found not lying in a spirit of generous forgiveness to faults, and a willingness to permit the errors of a lifetime to be entombed with the body while the attempt is being made to keep the virtues green; nor because the eulogists would be willing to speak of gambling as praiseworthy and right. The reason for this eulogy will not be found alone in what the man did or was,

but rather because over the body of John Morrissey politicians see the vote of the class who sustained and backed him, helped him to win a success, and being totally indifferent to what is true, or decent, or moral, or calculated to build up humanity and educate the young in uprightness, in faith toward God and in caring for the interests of men, all that is good, and pure, and clean is forgotten and trampled on, and with a unanimity which is frightful, which speaks of demoralization so general, so wide-spread, so deep and so damning that no language can describe it. Senators consent to turn their back on Jehovah and their face toward the idol of the moment, and worship a creature in character despicable, instead of a holy and pure God, who cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance. Not, then, to disturb the flow of the current of gush and mawkish, if not maudlin, sentimentality, not to excite the anger of men who ought to be ashamed of the base uses to which they have put their powers, but to recall attention to the inquiry raised in the sacred Word, we permit the Psalmist's question to obtain voice, and ask, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, who shall stand in His holy place?"

Not since Moses came down from the Mount, whose top blazed with lightnings, round which thunders with a deafening roar rolled, and whose foundations were shaken by the earthquake's throb, when he found the people, whom in fancy he left behind worshipers of the Supreme, bowing down to and making worship before a golden calf—not since that hour has there been any betrayal of the Supreme, any turning away from the Creator to the creature more humiliating to any just and dignified expectation regarding cultured, not to say Christian, men than what is visible at the present time, and "Blessed is he that walketh and keepeth his garments lest he walk naked and they see his shame."

The dream of progress finds no warrant in the Word of God. If it be true that the waters of the Euphrates are drying up, then may we expect the coming of the three unclean spirits, like frogs, which were to come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils working, which go forth to the high places of distinction and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

According to Bochart, the frog is characterized as a symbol for its rough, harsh, coarse voice, and as a symbol of complaining and reproaching, and as a symbol of empty loquacity, as a symbol of those born in sin, of drunkards, of impudence and of pride. These characteristics point to infidelity, distinguished by the absence of religion. Is it not here working side by side with Popery, as in Turkey and the East it works side-by-side



with Mohammedanism? Unbelief is everywhere. It is in the Church and in the world.

There are those who imagine that the world is to grow better until Christ shall be inaugurated in accordance with the vote of the nations of the earth. Such imagine that they are capable of designating the class who shall crowd the seats of the audience chamber of the Supreme.

Another class, among whom were Justin Martyr, Ignatius, Tertullian, three of the earliest writers of the Christian Church, with a vast number of the Church at this hour, believe that Christ's second advent is to be premillennial; that at His coming the world will be, despite the Gospel, waxing worse and worse. There will be defalcations in Christianity, desertions and betrayals, laxity in morals, disobedience to law—in other words, to use Christ's language, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of man; they shall be eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage"; and then when Christ shall come, anti-Christ shall be destroyed, Satan shall be bound, and the powers of hell shall be held in check for a thousand years; the government of the Church and the world shall fall into the hands of Christ, and false religions shall be rooted out; the Jews shall be converted and Jerusalem shall become the sacred metropolis of all the nations of the earth; and at the end of the thousand years, Satan shall come forth at the resurrection of the wicked, with power to lead the leprous host against the kingdom of God, when in the midst of their presumptuous effort, Christ shall come forth and make war upon them and destroy them, after which Satan and his followers shall be cast into the lake of fire.

If this view be correct, then may we expect terrible temptations to confront men. The tidal-wave of evil and of infidelity shall sweep over the land. Romanism shall appear in an attractive garb, arrayed in purple and scarlet colors, and decked with gold and precious stones, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

The cup is held out to all who will drink of it. The effort is being made to make its contents palatable. Christian ministers speak of the Roman Catholic Church as though it were the Church of Christ and not the Church of the Pope. They cast a veil of oblivion over acts of the Harlot of the Seven Hills, and gladly court the favor of that power whose influence is met in the editor's sanctum, on the lecture platform, in the halls of legislation, and in the prison-house of the condemned.

*Is Romanism a safe guide?* The question confronts us. Romanism is the patron of the vile. It ministers to the worst element of society and in the worst way. It furnishes priests who administer consolation to the worst criminals known in

history, and they die kissing an image and fancying themselves saved because of the power which they believe to be vested in men.

The criminal, whose chapter of murders and crimes are too abhorrent to be thought of, finds in a priest of the Church of the Pope one who assures him of eternal life, though his passions are so unchecked that his keepers are compelled to keep him in irons, and though he is so bigoted and intolerant that with an oath he drives a minister of religion from his presence. In the South in nearly every murderer's procession which passes from the prison cells to the gallows, a priest is seen, ready to do the bidding of the prince of the power of the air, and send a soul deceived into the presence of God, because he trusted in the offices of men rather than in the mediatorial work of Jesus Christ. John Morrissey died holding a crucifix in one hand and the hand of a priest in the other. Does that signify anything? Shall there be no protest against this deluding superstition? Shall such mummery be called "the ministrations of religion?" Is there anything in the religion of Jesus Christ? Is the word of God a mere literary production, or does it deal with stern realities and with awful and suggestive facts? "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" Can gamblers go there with the stain of guilt upon them? Men assent to the deluding supposition that a priest's promise will find recognition beyond the river and in the court of heaven.

Two theories are in the world. One comes from God; the other from beneath. One declares that only those who have "clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity nor sworn deceitfully, shall receive the blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation." The other claims that everybody can go into the hill of the Lord through the fires of purgatory, and that the power of saying who shall be pardoned and saved is committed to the Church of Rome. This theory filled Europe with night. It made the traffic in indulgences in the time of Luther and under the lead of Tetzels so profitable, that the coffers of the Church were filled by it, and the more magnificent structures of mediæval times were built by the money thus acquired, while deluded millions were swept into this abyss of woe because the true light was withheld and error usurped the place of truth. Men noted as robbers, as bandits, as the worst and vilest, died and left their booty to the Church, expecting by money to obtain in another world help which should deliver their souls from hell. Money was, through crime and through treachery, to save them beyond the grave.

This same theory is now held. It is leading millions astray. Let us call attention to the truth and declare that Christ Jesus,



the crucified, is "the truth, the way and the life," and that no man cometh unto the Father except through the mediatorial office of the Son, guided by the Holy Spirit. Let us help to cast the deadly doing down and lead men to believe in the washing away of sin through the blood of the Lamb.

The Church of the Pope is not the Church of Christ, it is the anti-Christ. She is described as the woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, arrayed in costly garments, and upon her forehead a name written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH! and she held a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. That cup typifies the power the Church of Rome offers to her votaries. If John Morrissey stood alone, if he had no following, if there were not behind him and associated with him voters enough to turn an election, and if those voters were not under the control of the priests of the Church of the Pope, there would be no Protection bills passed by the Senate, and no countenancing of the mummeries of Rome by Senators of the Empire State, and by the President of the United States, as was done by him at the pretended funeral of Victory Emmanuel in Washington. The cup is held out to the kings of the earth and to all who would seek to gain power by what it contains. They who give it welcome are deceived. The devil is not master. Satan is to be bound. The Church of Rome is not to be supreme. The cup is to be dashed out of her hand and they who worship the beast shall blaspheme the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores. Going wrong is an expensive luxury. It may give pleasure to-day, but it will inflict pain on the morrow. A holy life springing from a sanctified heart, free from external and mental idolatry and all corrupt affections and carnal confidences, united with watchfulness against all hypocrisy and dissimulation and vain professions or engagements to God or man, these things distinguished the acceptable worshipers from the rest of the congregation at the Sanctuary as they now do real from nominal Christianity. This character originates from regeneration, and is gradually formed by the Divine Spirit. Through faith we receive the blessing from the Lord, even righteousness from the God of our salvation.

Hence, Paul looking upon those who trusted to Judaism, as the deluded trust to Romanism now, said: "Brethren my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for right-



eousness to every one that believeth," and declared that if "thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved, for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." It follows that pugilistic pluck, the arts of the demagogue, the power of the vilest and of those who pander to the vile, furnish no ground for hope, no qualification of entrance into the hill of the Lord. The character of the blessed is described: 1. He hath clean hands. That a gambler hath not. Life is not a game. Success cannot be won by chance. It is product not an outgrowth. It is the ripened result which passed from seed to flower and from flower to fruit.

Enter the gambler's den. The night is given up to the spell of the fiend. Look at the bright, the fair, the hopeful and the reckless. There they come. They are drawn into the net. The costliest viands are provided. Liquors of every kind are free. The young man, heir to a fortune, perhaps the son of a widow, goes there to see and is lured to try his hand. This New York Senator who was low-voiced and strong-willed, encourages him. He tries, he wins. He is excited. He loses. He makes nothing of it. He is brave. Wine flows. The Senator pushes him on and the son of a widow is broken. He goes back to his mother lost, his character stained, his pocket empty and begins to live a lie. Such an instance is to be multiplied by thousands. The money thus won is taken to New York. Forty thousand dollars are spent to buy an election, and the press applauds and society says it is well. It is not well. The blood of murdered souls stains the garments of the man who wishes to die kissing an image and have

"Jesus lover of my soul"

sung at his funeral. Such men can go to the Senate of New York, but not to heaven. To enter they must have clean hands.

2. They must have a pure heart. To obtain this, sins must be seen, must be hated, must be repented of. Of this there was not the slightest evidence given by the Senator.

3. Such as lift not up the soul to vanity. The whole struggle of this man was to win what God condemns. There is no promise that such shall receive the blessing of the Lord.

Young men, you are in peril. Be not deceived. All is not gold that glitters. The applause of the bad is not the verdict of the good. A good life tells. It blesses here. It saves from sin. It saves to a holy, a beautiful, and a true life. It compels a man to keep out of the gambler's den, and away from the associations of the vile, and to mingle with the pure in heart, and find joy with the Lord here, with an assurance that when life is over the gates of praise shall be lifted and the soul

shall find a welcome at the foot of the throne. Such an one having come up out of great tribulation, and having robes washed and made clean in the blood of the Lamb, shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on him, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed him and shall lead him into fountains of living waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from his eyes.